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TWENTY CENTS DECEMBER 29, 1951

HOW MUSIC
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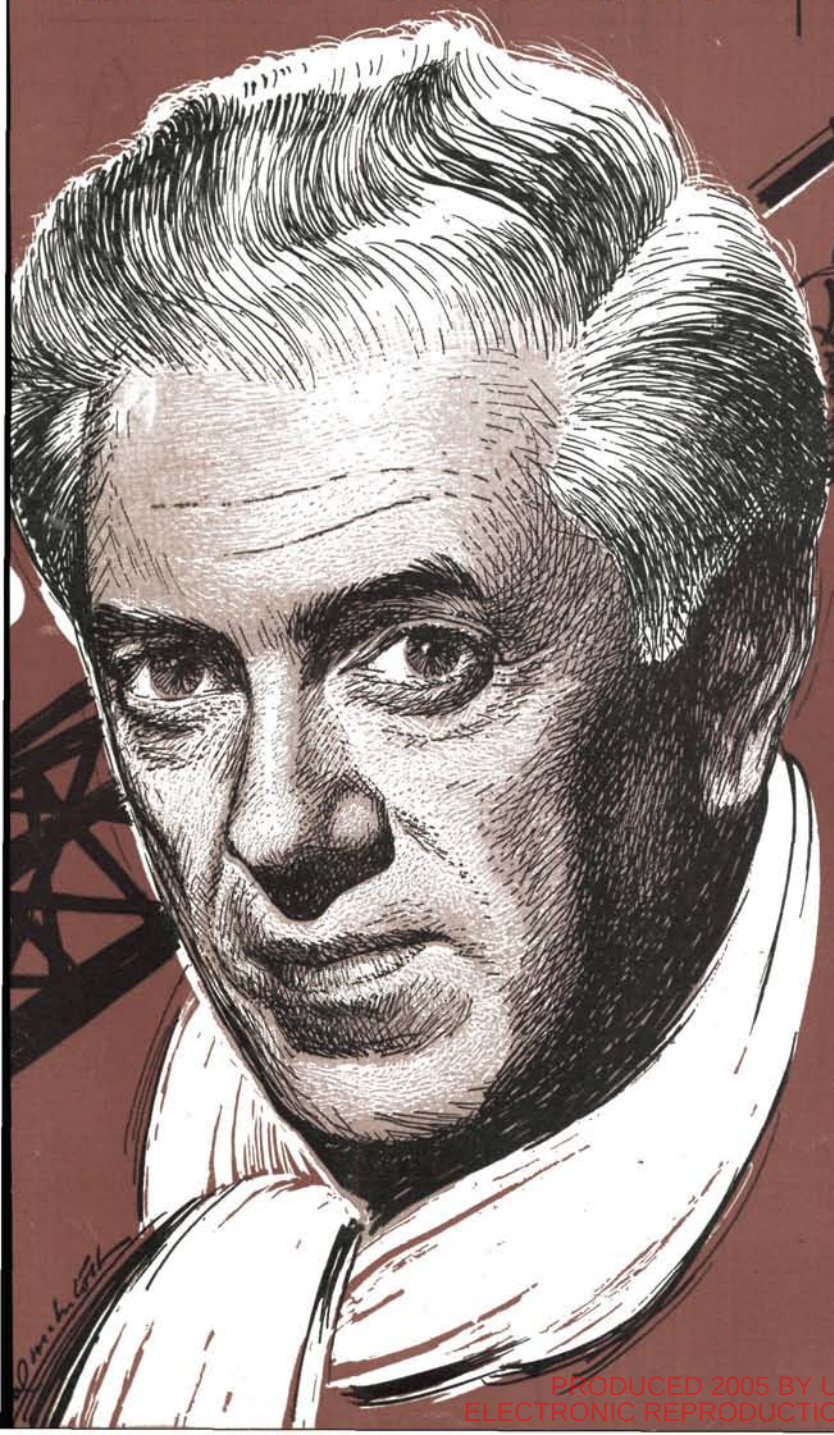

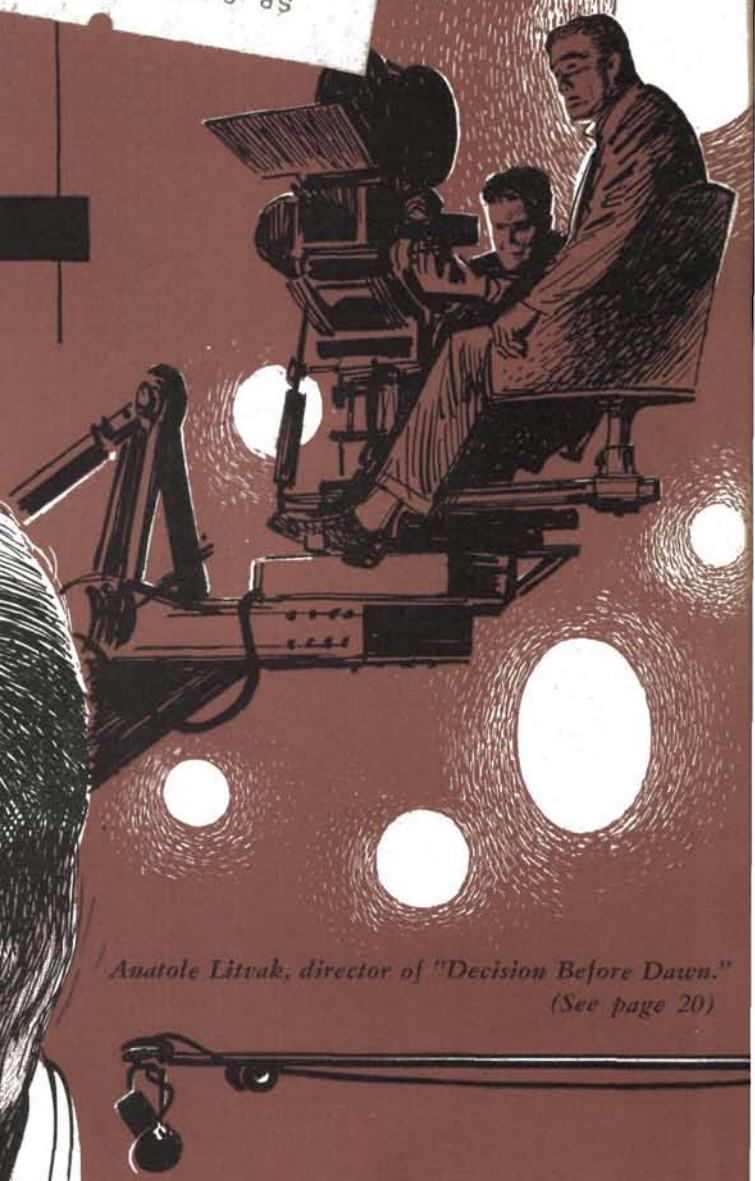

Anatole Litvak, director of "Decision Before Dawn."
(See page 20)

The Faith of An Historian

By JAMES T. SHOTWELL

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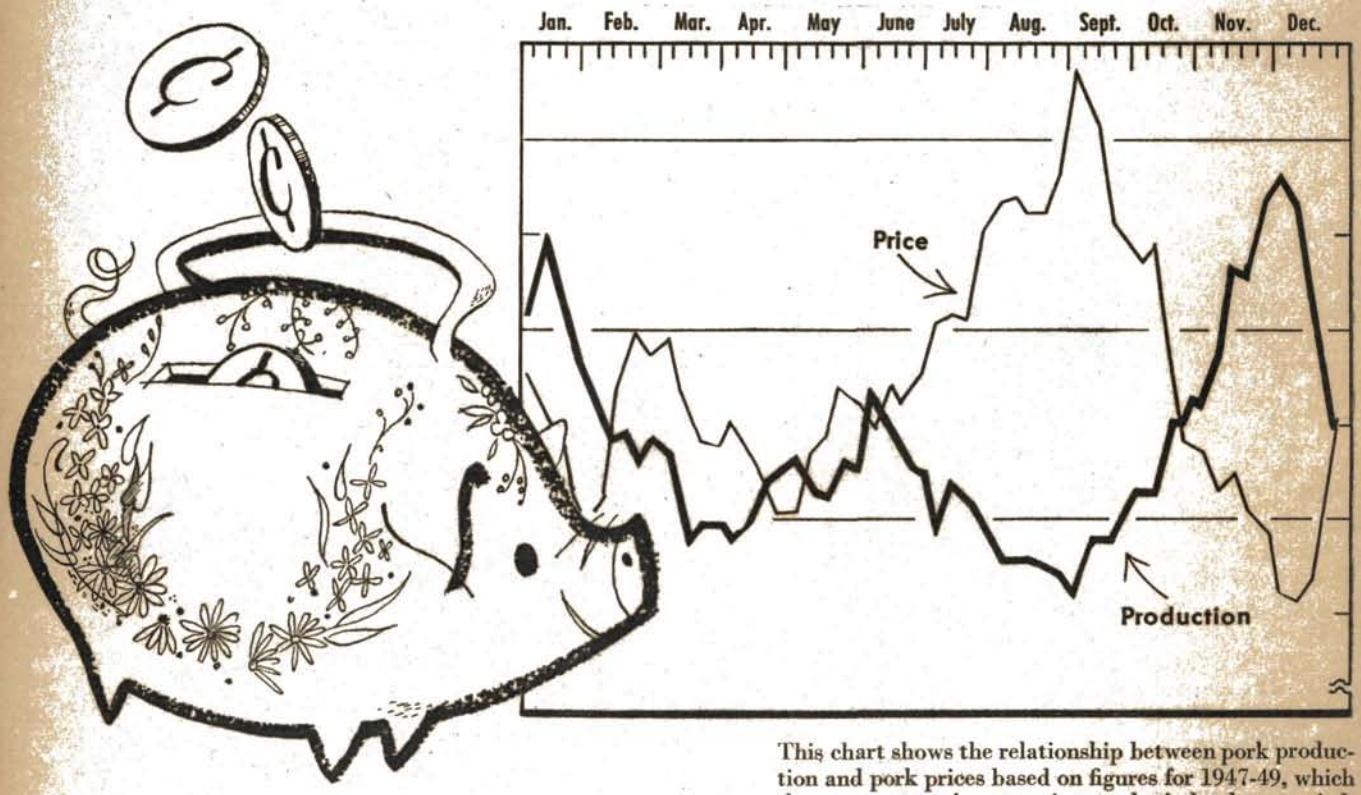
WHAT LAW

Makes Pork Cost Less in December Than It Does in September?



This chart shows the relationship between pork production and pork prices based on figures for 1947-49, which the government is now using as the index-base period.

The good old law of *supply and demand*. With pork, it works like this:

More than half the pigs are born in spring—also according to law, the *law of nature*. They spend the summer and early fall growing to pork-chop size.

Then, along about the time the first leaves fall, all these pigs begin to come to market. And the same thing happens that happens with any other perishable commodity (strawberries or eggs or oranges) when there is suddenly a lot more than there was.

The price just naturally goes down!

That chart at the top shows how the cycle goes. *More pork—lower prices* through the winter months; *less pork—higher prices* through the summer.

But summertime is always the time when a big new meat crop is "growing up" on America's farms and ranches.

AMERICAN MEAT INSTITUTE

Headquarters, Chicago • *Members throughout the U.S.*

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December 29, 1951

Cover Drawing by Hal McIntosh

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 W. 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. E. De Golyer, Chairman of the Board; Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Nathan Cohn, Assistant Treasurer; Robert A. Burghardt, Advertising Director; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director; Ray Goodman, Circulation Manager. Subscription $6 a year; $7 in Canada. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U. S. Vol. XXXIV, No. 52, December 29, 1951. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office in New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

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Career girl, 1965

Little Miss Telephone herself. Thirty-five members of her family have worked for the telephone company.

That's Karen Terry — She's not yet four and cute as a button. Already she's decided to be a telephone operator when she grows up.

There are many reasons for her choice. For Karen is related to an interesting telephone family in California. Thirty-five members of this family have worked for the telephone company in the past sixty-five years. Many still do.

Lots to Talk About—When Karen's Aunt Ella was asked what the dinner conversation is like when they get together, she said — "Why we talk shop, of course. All about the telephone company and our friends."

It's that way with thousands of other families throughout the country. One Bell Telephone Company found that 2300, or ten per cent, of its employees had members of their families in telephone work.

Stepping Ahead — A young man doesn't follow his Dad in a job unless Dad says, "Come along, son — you'll find it as good a place as I did." You won't find sister following sister, and brother following brother into telephone work without reason. They like the work and the company.

Good people in good jobs help to give this country the best telephone service in the world at low cost.

BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

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TRADE Winds

I HAVE JUST RETURNED from the funeral services for Harold Ross, creator, editor, and heart and soul of *The New Yorker* magazine for 26 years. Like everyone else in the overcrowded chapel, I felt that I was witnessing the final episode in a whole era of American humor—an era of which Ross was the apostle and guiding spirit. The services, conducted by the Chaplain of Yale, were brief and polite, but strangely impersonal. Most of the old friends and admirers who filled the chapel to overflowing a full hour before the ceremony was scheduled to begin had expected one of Ross's old stalwarts on the staff to speak: White or Thurber or Gibbs. All of them, however, sat mutely in the audience, too stricken to voice their grief publicly, too conscious of the void that suddenly had been left in their scheme of things. *The New Yorker*'s lead piece on its lost editor will appear after this issue of *SRL* has gone to press, but considering the fact that it is being written by E. B. White, it is safe to assume that it will approximate perfection.

The New Yorker undoubtedly can and will prosper without Ross, but it will never be quite the same. Some departments may even improve. Motion pictures, for instance, bored him to distraction, and the page devoted to them each week was, as a result, almost unbelievably inadequate. The book section, too, has been suffering from lack of directive since Fadiman stepped out. Ross had a grievance against all Hollywoodites and book publishers, was fond of declaiming that they made fortunes by "picking his brains all the time." There was considerable evidence, it must be admitted, to support his point of view. But the sparkle of the front section of *The New Yorker*, the marvelous clarity and accuracy of its articles, and the originality, conciseness, and wit of its special features —these were the reflections of Harold Ross—Ross and the amazing little group of temperamental, supersensitive, and pernickety geniuses whom first he discovered, then transformed into his dedicated slaves. For all his crochetiness and personal idiosyncracies, Ross was without question the best damn magazine editor in the past fifty years.

The sudden death of Harold Ross, of course, will make readers view Dale Kramer's just-published "Ross and *The New Yorker*" in a different light. On the whole, it is an affectionate and painstaking job, though the author, like so many who tried before him, never quite succeeds in pinning his subject's unique personality down on paper. Had he known that Ross would be dead within a month of the book's publication, I'm sure that Kramer, an amiable and unprejudiced critic, would have tempered some of his anecdotes and conclusions. As it stands, however, it is the best available collection of the multitude of fantastic and often apocryphal legends that people have been telling, and will continue to tell for years to come, about one of the most colorful and refreshing personalities of our time.

NOT MANY BOSSES, FORTUNATELY, possess the peculiar knack Harold Ross had for turning a serene office force into pandemonium merely by sauntering through the premises—shifting managing editors and desk space as he progressed. There does exist a whole

army of executives, however, who never have learned the vital secret for keeping their private secretaries contented. Hell hath no fury like a secretary who nurses a grievance—be it real or imaginary. Take heed, therefore, of the results of a survey conducted by the personnel manager of a big woolen company to determine what kind of bosses irritate their secretaries most. Here are the "winners" — and very much disputed champions:

1. The boss who keeps his secretary overtime without previous notice.

2. The boss who dawdles around until five P.M. and then begins the day's dictation.

3. The boss who refers to his secre-

tary as his "stenographer" and makes bad jokes about her in front of visitors.

4. The boss who marks up work that could be corrected, and slashes a line through a four-page letter because one word is incorrectly spelled.

5. The boss who interrupts his secretary during her lunch hour, if she has stayed to eat in her office.

6. The boss who hovers over her while she is typing a letter, pointing out errors before she has a chance to notice them herself.

7. The boss who has seen too many Grade-B movies and cheap cartoons,

and believes in the motto, "Hands Across the Knee."

8. The boss who never voluntarily says, "Gosh, your letters have been immaculate lately—and done so quickly, too," or "By the way, Miss Jones, isn't this your birthday?"

9. The boss who only gives a raise after the secretary has gone through countless humiliating sessions to wangle one. This type boss is usually the one who is most apt to flash a hefty bankroll continuously before his secretary's eyes.

10. The boss who regards his secretary as general errand girl for his entire family. She is expected to devote her lunch hour—particularly when it is raining heavily—to exchanging nylon stockings for his wife, picking up theatre tickets for his mother-in-law, and going to a repair shop clear across the city to find out why his brother's 1939 Buick is still out of commission.

Do you recognize yourself in any of these categories? Me, I've got a special problem on my hands with my secretary Jezebel. Due to her unfortunate fondness for listening to television programs, she heard me assert on a "What's My Line?" session that my secretary owned "the most beautiful mink coat on Madison Avenue." Now she's trying to bludgeon me into buying her one. As Jimmy Durante would say, "What a perdicument!". . . .

TWO WEEKS AFTER HE HAD turned in the completed manuscript of "The Panama Canal," for the Landmark Series, author Bob Considine had an opportunity to visit the "Big Ditch" in person. After his inspection he called the officer in charge aside and said, "General, I'm afraid you'll have to make a few changes in your canal down here." "What do you mean?" bridled the General. "There are several details," explained Bob. "that don't quite jibe with the descriptions in my book." . . .

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"Yes, I did say that about you, Marge—but I didn't say it was *true*!"

Apprised of the fact, by the way, that "The Panama Canal" was intended primarily for fifth-graders, Considine promptly suggested changing the title to "The Elementary Canal." . . . A new comedy act recorded a half-hour show recently for submission to a big sponsor. "But there's no audience in the studio," complained one of the comedians. "How are we gonna get laughs?" The agent said, "Don't worry. We'll tape in laughs from a Groucho Marx recording." "But won't Groucho get sore?" persisted the comic. "Nah," the agent assured him. "He doesn't know it, but we taped in *his* laughs from Jack Benny!" . . . Songstress Kay Carrington (wife of Composer Arthur Schwartz) computes her day-to-day check book balance with meticulous care, but for some strange reason, her end-of-the-month figures rarely agree with that of the bank. Kay had a ready explanation for her December discrepancy, however: "I just forgot to deduct last month's mistake." . . .

STUART BRENT HAS INTRODUCED a new feature in his bookshop at 670 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, that is paying big dividends. Doubtlessly spurred by the fact that his wife has played the piano with several major orchestras, and that her partner is a former student of Schnabel, he has built a room fifty by thirteen at the rear of his shop and instituted a series of concerts and recitals that invariably are Standing Room Only. On its way in—and out—the audience buys plenty of books and records. When the Fine Arts Quartet played at Brent's shop he sold forty of their long-playing records plus $200 worth of books. There is still plenty of business around for the bookseller who has the will and brains to go out and get it!

MEYER WAGMAN, THE TYPOGRAPHER, has a nine-year-old son, Michael, who is another near-prodigy at the piano, with a general I.Q. to match. At a party the other evening at the Wagmans the conversation drifted around to Gertrude Stein, and one guest thought he'd test young Michael's knowledge. "Mike," he demanded, "when I say a rose is a rose is a rose is a rose, what does it mean to you?" Michael promptly answered "Whiskey." —BENNETT CERF.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 926)

HAMILTON W. MABIE:

My STUDY FIRE (Christmas Eve)

Santa Claus remains by virtue of a common understanding that childhood shall not be despoiled of one of its most cherished beliefs, by either the mythologist . . ., or the scientist, with his heartless diatribe against superstition.

Before you hibernate be sure you have the new

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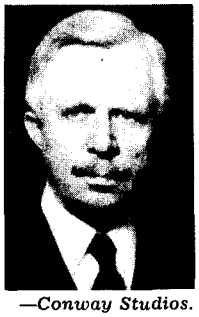
The Saturday Review of Literature

The Faith of An Historian

JAMES T. SHOTWELL



—Conway Studios.
James T. Shotwell

EDITOR'S NOTE: *In these columns last week Edgar Ansel Mowrer, Pulitzer Prize-winning foreign correspondent, stated a journalist's faith in the future of the human race ("A Good Time to Be Alive"). As a companion piece* SRL *this week presents the credo of one of America's most distinguished historians, James T. Shotwell, president-emeritus of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Bruce professor-emeritus of the history of international relations at Columbia University. Dr. Shotwell's books include "The History of History" and "War As An Instrument of National Policy."*

WHEN I compare the world of today—its desperate confusion, the fears that mock its hopes, its sense of powerlessness in the possession of power—with the quiet, isolated world of the nineteenth century in which I grew up, the perspective of the years takes on incredible dimensions of distance. Although the signs of coming change were all about us, most of our lives still followed the pattern set for us by the past. Progress was made with increasing tempo in the arts and sciences, but only at such speed as to enrich without unduly disrupting the heritage of the past. Life was still dominated, as it had been from the beginning, by the iron law of repetition forced upon it by the tyranny of the calendar, so long as each one had to meet his recurrent needs by his own effort. Life on the farm still followed the routine of ancient times as set forth in Hesiod's "Works and Days" or Cato's directions for good farming. Town life, except in the few big cities, responded to much the same rhythm and kept largely to old, established ways.

It was a world of familiar things; upon the whole a friendly one, in spite of the fact that most people worked hard and long. For church and school taught that the pursuit of happiness lay in the performance of duty, a comfortable doctrine as long as duty consisted in doing the things that brought immediate rewards in the good opinion of one's neighbors. When the whistle blew at six o'clock for the twelve-hour day at the mill, the workman knew that the farmer was already at his chores, and the level of life was kept even for town and farm. The accepted things were done in the accepted way.

We are now so far from that repetitive, static world that it is almost impossible to realize how near in time to it we still are—not merely where time has stood still in isolated, backward parts of the country, but where it has moved most swiftly. My own grandparents hewed their farms from the wilderness. Every hundred acres, the unit of pioneer farming, was a self-contained economy, using the word as Aristotle used it, to describe household management. Only, Aristotle had in mind a much more complicated, more highly developed society than that of this simple way of living—the kind of estate, for example, that George Washington owned at Mount Vernon, with all the complications of slavery and access to more than local markets. The range of market towns for the early settlers was not over a dozen miles, and each settlement lived a life apart. Politics intruded only a little into it, because it dealt only with a limited range of questions, leaving the most pressing ones to the local community. Party loyalties were inherited, embodying past outlooks or prejudices and only changing when the structure of society was shaken by crises. The Founding Fathers held a place alongside the Major Prophets; there could be differences in interpreting them but no difference in attitude towards them, for orthodoxy was sound politics.

THE reminder of these things, so near and yet so far off, is not a mere excursion from realities today, however it may stir nostalgic memories. For it is against that background that the central fact in contemporary civilization becomes clear, the change from a static to a dynamic world. Greater than all the achievements of science in discovery and invention is the difference in the nature of its processes from those of the pre-scientific ages. They have broken in upon the endless rhythm that repeated age-old ways of doing things, and created a world that is forever new. For every advance in science causes a displacement in society, which in turn calls for new inventions and discoveries with further displacements. The process is one of geometric progression. This

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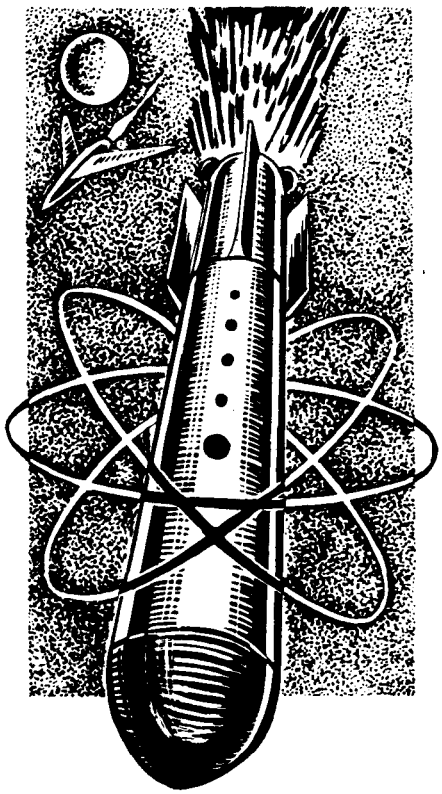
is the fundamental nature of the revolution caused by modern science, the greatest happening in all history.

Now what contribution can the historian offer to the understanding of such an event, which has no parallel in the past? There would be none at all if history were what most people think it to be, a museum of antiquities, or a branch of literature. The discipline of the historian lies more in the field of science than in that of the arts. Meticulous scholarship is as necessary for establishing truth in the confused and contradictory annals of the past as mathematics for measuring the elusive data of science. And scholarship means criticism, not only of the facts but of their interrelation—which is the only way the records acquire meaning. Antiquarianism is a pleasant pastime, but history has a sterner purpose.

That history began as a declaration of freedom of thought, as a denial of accepted belief rather than a repository of it, should not be lost sight of today. If it is to serve as a glass and compass by which to take our bearings on the vast and turbulent tide of current happenings, we cannot accept the past on its own terms, for it did not have the problems which now confront us. Disaster lurks for those who look behind while moving forward. On the other hand, we cannot chart a course for ourselves and those who follow after unless we know how we got where we are.

Now, viewed in the long perspectives of history, the most significant thing about this culmination of all revolutions, which science has brought about, is not that it has opened up the universe to knowledge and power, but that it is so late in coming. Time stood still for the men of the ice ages. There are two stone hatchets on my desk, which serve for paper weights on documents of the United Nations, one of chipped stone and the other rubbed to more even shape. Between these two techniques lay some ten or twenty thousand years. Yet both were used for cutting or smashing things long centuries before the first trickle of molten copper and tin furnished tools to build the pyramids. The obstacle to progress was not a lack in the capacity of primitive man for that faculty which leads to discovery, curiosity, for that is an instinct older than man himself; it was because the two techniques which governed actions outside of the range of habitual routine led into blind alleys instead of toward the freedom of the mind—which is the one essential for progress. They were the techniques of safety against the dangers due to nature or man himself, those of the taboos and of war. The long delay in human development was chiefly due to the fact, still dominant today, that protection in time of crises may become oppression in the normal course of daily life.



The specialists in the taboo—medicine men, magicians, and priests—were the only ones who knew how to deal with that deadly potency residing in new, strange things and revealing itself in the crises of life. The cults and codes over which they presided were not for the purpose of escape from the orthodoxy of superstition, but gave it expression in ways that held awed and submissive minds in unprotesting bondage. Civilization, as the name implies, was the taking over of these processes by secular powers. This did not mean a lessening of the spiritual life, so blindly fumbling in primitive man, but a clarification of it. Its place in the dynamic world of today is not that of a technique of safety to meet the psychic terrors of change, as in taboo, but in the recognition of the limitations of the mind in its exploration of the mystery of life and the world. That exploration is left for science, the only valid interpreter of change.

In the vast horizon which this opens up, two qualifications must not be lost sight of. The primitive mind lives on in all of us; and it dominates in all the backward areas where the conditions of living have only now begun to feel the touch of progress. In all of us reason is still only a covering for a mile-deep reservoir of instinctive sentiments and emotions. This persistence of the primitive in our minds was the chief theme of one of the most intellectual historians of our time, James Harvey Robinson; but his illuminating surveys of "the ice-age mind" should not blind us to the fact that the rate of our escape to a more rational world has speeded up incredibly, even in our own lifetime. That puzzle of the philosophers, which so intrigued the sages of China, as to which has the primacy, thought or action, is being solved before our eyes by the way the conquest of time and space is made possible by instruments that reach beyond the limited capacity of our senses. In these last few years we have left Newton's solid universe almost as far behind as that of Ptolemy, and the tracers that have replaced the microscope have only just begun the exploration of the solar system of the atom. Knowledge has become a temporary lodging place in a mysterious universe, which we shall never wholly understand. But the mystery is now a challenge to advance, not an impediment. The obstacles are only stepping stones along the way.

THE lesson of history in the great area once dominated by the taboo is therefore, upon the whole, reasonably reassuring. But what of that other technique of emergencies, war? Does it offer any promise of a parallel development toward control and ultimate disappearance? If the answer to this question is sought in a survey of purely contemporary events, it is an emphatic "no." Never has war and the threat of it more dominated human affairs the world over than in these last years. But in the perspectives of history this tragic era presents another aspect than that of helpless involvement in an ever mounting danger. For that very danger has for the first time made the problem of peace the supreme issue of politics. The fact that the solution has not yet been found, or at least not yet accepted, should not blind one to the epochal fact that never before our time was *peace as such*, as against *war as such*, considered by practical statesmen or by realistic nations as a political possibility.

Again, as in the case of the taboo, the full significance of the place of war in the world today can best be seen by going back to the beginnings. More constant than the psychic dangers that confronted primitive man were the physical ones, especially from beasts of prey, of whom he was one. By stratagem and by the use of weapons he not only survived as a fighter, but proved his superiority over all the animal world. More dan-

(*Continued on page* 24)

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Americana. *As we remarked three weeks ago in presenting reviews of Lloyd Morris's "Incredible New York" and Nelson Algren's "Chicago: City on the Make," this has been a good season for lively local history. This week we review two more well-written, anecdote-crammed chronicles of our metropolises and their citizens: George Fuermann's "Houston: Land of the Big Rich" (see below) and Francis F. Beirne's "The Amiable Baltimoreans" (page 9). . . . Some years ago George Willison revealed an uncommon talent for presenting our seventeenth-century national heroes as human beings in his account of New England's beginnings, "Saints and Strangers." Now he has done the same thing for the FFV's in "Behold Virginia!" (page 9). . . . Ben Lucien Burman, whose work is well known to* SRL *readers, has caught the spirit of the present-day Mississippi in "Children of Noah" (page 23).*

Where Money Flows Like Oil

HOUSTON: Land of the Big Rich. By George Fuermann. New York: Doubleday & Co. 255 pp. $3.50.

By Carl Victor Little

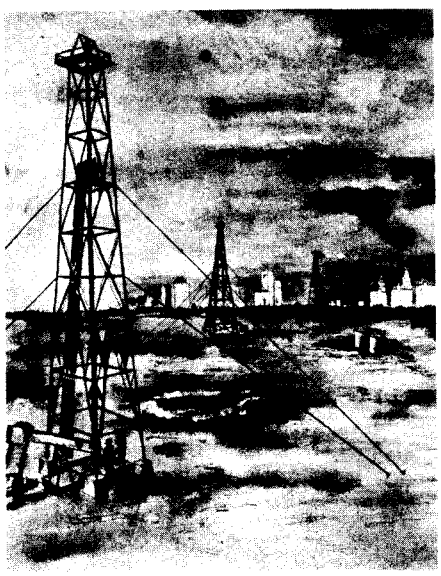
There was a man in my town,
  Where 'tis folly to be wise,
Who jumped into a bramble bush—
  But wrong is your surmise.
This gent pulled up the bramble bush,
  And oil began to flow;
A civic leader he became—
  With fifteen Cadillacs or so.

BUT, alas and alack, the hero of the above bit of anti-poetry, culled from the manuscript of my forthcoming "Sex and Thermodynamics; Or, Whither Civic Leadership in Time of Crisis?," is considered such a drab and commonplace character in great big sprawling Houston that he didn't make Mr. Fuermann's rollicking and informative book.

The man who disguised himself as a rabbit hunter, discovered the success of a secret oil-drilling operation, and then leased all the land in the vicinity, is here. So is the tycoon with fifty hats, costing $100 each, and another who gave away $200,000,000 and a lot of unheeded advice to Harry Truman. So is the gent who tips only in silver dollars, sometimes forty at a crack.

The fellow who parked his Cadillac in a downtown no-parking zone, paying off his accumulated tickets $1,000 at a time is herewith immortalized as well as the gentleman who got rich *not* striking oil when he drilled. But our hero who struck oil by simply pulling up a bramble bush is the smallest kind of goobers in fabulous Houston. And Mr. Fuermann takes little cognizance of civic peanuts in this work.

Mr. Fuermann, a thirtyish columnist for *The Houston Post*, where O. Henry, Bob Casey, and Carrie Nation's husband once worked, adheres closely to the promise in the title: "Houston: Land of the Big Rich." It would have been a nice touch had Mr. Fuermann dedicated his book to Lady Luck and the bitch-goddess Success. For this is all about materialistic, filthy rich, loud-talking Houston and the characters who have given Houston its national reputation as a Never-Never Land, with emphasis on the wowsers, the newly-rich, and the exhibitionists. In short, Mr. Fuermann fulfills the contract in the title, accentuating the zany side of the great city that the nation has received from other writers. (The Chamber of Commerce once tried to induce magazines to quit emphasizing the glamorous, wealthy aspect of Houston because of the influx of latter-day damyankee carpetbaggers but to no avail. The town is still buzzing about the grifter who reportedly came to Houston in a stolen car just in time to make the Social Register then going to press.)



—By Lowell Collins for "Houston" jacket.

Mr. Fuermann—and correctly, his theme being what it is—devotes much space to the Shamrock, Glenn McCarthy's hotel decorated in sixty-three shades of green, the tint of green on U. S. currency predominating. (Get Mrs. Max Schuster to tell you about the child's plate lunch she ordered for her grandson at a cost of $7.50, not including the tip). But it's a pleasure to toss one's money about in the Shamrock, which has built its own Riviera, complete with countesses and cabanas, and which houses the celebrated Cork Club, where strands of gold are woven into the stair carpet.

There's much in Mr. Fuermann's book about Glenn McCarthy, who, owing two insurance companies the token sum of $50,000,000, has just returned from the Near East, where he leased Egypt for drilling purposes. Let unimaginative oil operators of other cities lease measly oil fields, if they will. We Houstonians lease whole countries!

Oh, yes, and we've got Uncle Jesse Jones, the man who made a seaport of landlocked Houston and who, at seventy-seven has written a book that is making the best-seller lists; and Oveta Culp Hobby, the personable, enlightened publisher and former chief WAC; Ernie Coker and Madeline Pollard, nationally-known restaurateurs; and a whole passel of right-wing civic leaders from whom Glenn McCarthy tried in vain to collect for the expenses connected with the First Coming of Douglas MacArthur. (Mr. McCarthy made the mistake of not passing the hat *before* the photographers left.)

Yes, Mr. Fuermann gives you Houston: Land of The Big Rich, in an entertaining, sometimes hilarious, revealing volume done in nifty, rat-tat-tat, jet-propelled columnese. Mr. Fuermann has a chapter on Culture with a capital C but apparently can't put his heart in it, even though we have Efrem Kurtz and his dog Dandy, the latter appearing nationally in whisky testimonial ads. Culture? What's that to us in Houston? Do you drill for it? But I forgive Mr. Fuermann for his one digression from his Big Rich theme.

Carl Victor Little, daily columnist and book reviewer for The Houston Press, *also contributes a daily book column to the* San Francisco News.

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Francis F. Beirne—"intimacy and fondness."

Portrait of a City

THE AMIABLE BALTIMOREANS. By Francis F. Beirne. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 400 pp. $5.

By HOLMES ALEXANDER

BALTIMORE is a fabulous character from real life whom many a fictioneer has tried in vain to capture.

The reason for the failure could be that this good old city, like lots of picturesque and incredible individuals, simply defies reduction to any form of imaginative art.

There are too many contradictions. Baltimore was sentimental about the Confederacy but stayed in the Union and struck it rich. Baltimore is the product of great inventive and mercantile genius, but most of the men who built her railroads, libraries, art galleries, hospitals, and universities were out-of-towners. Some of the great male personalities—like H. L. Mencken and Babe Ruth—are straight off the sidewalks; yet the romantic ladies—like Betsy Patterson and Wallis Warfield—too often marry outsiders and move away. Baltimore is bawdy and puritanical; beautiful and squalid; affectionate toward her favorites but painfully snooty toward strangers who lack a proper introduction. Baltimore won't dress up for a portrait; won't sit still for a photograph; can't be typed—as Boston and Philadelphia have been—for a novel or a play. Baltimore can't be made to seem human or understandable except in a factual and believe-it-or-not biography.

Happily, that is exactly what Mr. Beirne has undertaken and accomplished. Although a man of wit and whimsy (Christopher Billup of the syndicated columns) he's also one of integrity and judgment. These last-mentioned qualities have served him well in "The Amiable Baltimoreans." He has done a job of shoeleather research and wise selection, resisting any temptation to be lyrical about Baltimore's charms or clever about her frailties. He has accomplished the considerable feat of writing about living people and their ancestors without making anybody angry, and he's skated gracefully on a lot of thin ice in the process. He has in sum brought forth a book which his fellow townsmen will enjoy and which will entertain and instruct the less fortunate inmates of less wonderful cities.

The story of Baltimore, of course, is that of her institutions—human, social, and otherwise. They are naturally all mixed up. There was Emanuel Chambers, doorman of the Maryland Club, who named five club members to invest his fortune of $154,000 and disperse the proceeds to local charities "regardless of race, color, or creed." There is the Bachelors Cotillon, so-called, which is the championship affair for debutantes; and there's the Maryland Hunt Cup steeplechase, which young lawyers, bankers, and legislators would rather win than conquer an empire. There is the booming waterfront, which brings in much of the city's wealth.

Most readers, I believe, will find Mr. Beirne—a Virginian by the way—at his best when writing as a reporter rather than an historian. He takes us back to the colonial days, but he doesn't begin to sparkle until he escorts us to the dances and races, the galleries and the seafood houses of his own time. Frank Beirne is an "eligible" who has met all the notables and oddities who've walked our streets for the past forty years. Thus he brings to this work the intimacy and fondness, always touched with kindly humor, of the Boswellian art.

The book is spiced with many nifty turns of repartee and character sketches. As a devotee of Baltimore lore I think I can say that all are genuine and none is stale. Nobody can hope to understand or appreciate Baltimore without getting to know her memorable inhabitants, the quick and the dead, the nationally noted and the locally beloved. This book, a storehouse of such knowledge, is a constant delight.

Holmes Alexander, a Baltimore newspaperman, is the author of lives of Aaron Burr and Martin Van Buren.

George F. Willison—"the human side."

Life in a Colony

BEHOLD VIRGINIA! The Fifth Crown. By George F. Willison. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 422 pp. $4.75.

By WESLEY FRANK CRAVEN

DR. WILLISON'S latest work is a readable and frequently instructive account of Virginia's first years. Taking his title from the hope recorded on the Virginia seal that the colony might provide a fifth crown (in addition to the crowns of England, Scotland, Ireland, and France), he retells the story of Jamestown in detail from 1607 to 1624, when the Virginia Company was dissolved and the English settlers on the James came under the direct control of the royal government. This full discussion of the colony's founding is followed by a short summary of its fortunes through the remaining years of the seventeenth century. A final chapter on Virginia's part in the movement for independence serves as epilogue to the book.

As in his earlier "Saints and Strangers," a study of the Plymouth Pilgrims, Mr. Willison is primarily concerned with the human side of history. His story, which is developed in narrative form with strict regard for chronology, is a story of the men who played the leading roles at Jamestown—of Gosnold, Wingfield, Smith, New-

Wesley Frank Craven, professor of history at Princeton University, is the author of "The Southern Colonies in the Seventeenth Century."

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port, Percy, Argall, Gates, De La Warr, Dale, Rolfe, Yeardley, and Wyatt, and of Powhatan and Opechancano. Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Edwin Sandys, and others of the adventurers in England also find place in the narrative, but it is obvious that Captain John Smith is of greater interest to the author than is Sir Thomas Smith, And when the scene of action is shifted from Jamestown to London it is for the purpose chiefly of lending logic to the sequence of events in the colony.

This focus on Jamestown, though offering certain advantages, imposes definite limitations on the value of the study. During the very years that are of primary interest to Mr. Willison the ultimate control of the Virginia venture was located in London rather than in Jamestown, and the men who in Virginia assumed responsibility for the execution of policy were agents, not principals. It is not intended to suggest that Mr. Willison is unaware of this fact. His text is enlightened throughout by scrupulous regard for the findings of other historians, including those who have felt the need for emphasis no less on the actions of the adventurers than on the experiences of the colonists. But it can be fairly said that he has studied one side of the story more closely than the other, and that this choice of interest is reflected at times in a failure to recognize the full weight of the adventurers' influence on developments in the colony.

A case in point is provided by the treatment of Captain Christopher Newport, who through several years served to bring from England the recruits and supplies which helped sustain the colony. A more sympathetic view of Newport's special status as an agent, as one who usually had come only recently from London with freshly given instructions and who soon must return to London, might have softened the author's judgment of the man.

Closer study might also have given Mr. Willison more sympathy for the objectives set by the adventurers, a better understanding of the limitations under which they worked, and a fuller appreciation of their extraordinary

(Continued on page 23)

Poetry. *More than any other form of literature verse defies the ministrations of the translator. Thus it is that Paul Eluard, Raymond Queneau, and Henri Michaux—in the opinion of Justin O'Brien perhaps the "most considerable French poets of the present"—are little-known in this country. Thanks to "scrupulous and intuitive translators," some of Michaux's work is now available to English-speaking readers: his "The Barbarian in Asia," published several years ago, and his "Selected Writings," which Professor O'Brien reviews on page 11. On the other hand, the name and works of Wallace Stevens, the Hartford insurance executive who has been regularly publishing notable verse over the past thirty-five years, are well known to everyone who has followed contemporary American poetry. It is good to have his essays, published in various places during the last decade, gathered into a single volume, "The Necessary Angel," which Gerard Previn Meyer reviews on page 11.*

Inner Echoes of Word Sounds

THE SORROWS OF COLD STONE: Poems 1940-1950. By John Malcolm Brinnin. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. $3.

By Raymond Holden

JOHN MALCOLM BRINNIN's fourth volume of poems is a collection, presumably chosen by the poet himself, from his work of the last ten years, including a considerable number of pieces not heretofore published in book form. It would be reasonable, therefore, to suppose that the reader may draw from this volume a fair picture of what Mr. Brinnin conceives his work and himself as a poet to be.

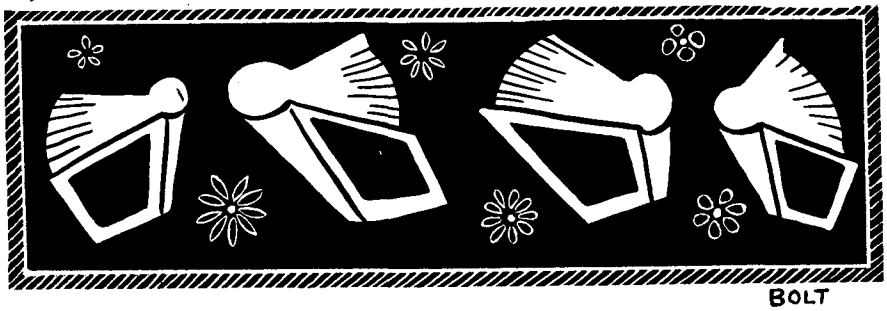
What are the ingredients of the picture? Like the decorative illustrations which Theodoros Stamos has done to accompany the poems, these ingredients are subject to numerous interpretations. To this reviewer there seem to be among them, first, a very remarkable talent; second, a background of understanding of the best in English poetry; and third, an ability to achieve a successful fusion between imaginative mood and the form of a poem. This should add up to something very fine and, in a sense, it does.

Mr. Brinnin has used his talent with great elegance and distinction to make some very fine poems, yet there are moments when it seems his enormous technical knowledge and his intricate proficiency have been used to build a glittering and highly ornamented cathedral for the worship of a not entirely clean skeleton. This, it must be said, is a reviewer's impression and is, perhaps, beside the point. Mr. Brinnin is obviously interested in the semantics and phonetics of language rather than in its recognized declarative potentialities.

His longish poem, "The Worm in the Whirling Cross," is as interesting as a crossword puzzle, though not much more so, yet the reader cannot help admiring the author's virtuosity and the brilliance with which he delivers volley after volley of pun and paronomasia, as if his mind were playing tennis with the sound it utters and the sound were winning a love set.

Although it seems to me that Mr. Brinnin overdoes this poetic punning and leans a little heavily on the seventeenth century, there are surely few American poets writing today who are more keenly aware of the great importance to poetry—and it is an importance far greater than many poets and most readers of poetry believe—of those inner echoes which bound back and forth among the walls of words.

There are many beautiful poems in this book, both grave and light, which make it plain that Mr. Brinnin, whatever he wishes or does not wish to say, has an ear and a voice which rank him high among American poets.



BOLT

Raymond Holden is the author of "Arrow at the Heel," "Believe the Heart," and other volumes of verse.

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Poetry of the Mind

SELECTED WRITINGS: The Space Within. By Henri Michaux. Translated with an introduction by Richard Ellmann. New York: New Directions. 297 *pp.* $3.50.

By JUSTIN O'BRIEN

WITHOUT New Directions such French writers as Mallarmé and Apollinaire, who died many years ago and are still fecundating poets of all languages, and Eluard, Queneau, and Michaux, who are destined to influence future generations, would be unknown or inadequately known in America. That young publishing house consistently introduces to the American public the best in the avant-garde writing of Europe. Those who read French sometimes feel that the translations are not always worthy of the originals, but Henri Michaux, one of the three or four most considerable French poets of the present, has been fortunate in this regard. This is the second of his books to appear in America, both issued by New Directions; the first was translated by Sylvia Beach and the second by Richard Ellmann, both scrupulous and intuitive translators.

"The Space Within"—a faithful rendering of the original title Michaux gave this anthology—reflects the content of his original poetry, in which everything takes place in the mind. In another volume Henri Michaux characteristically wrote:

> Man is inclined to walk on riverbanks, thinking of nothing. In the belief that he is contemplating the river or simply walking aimlessly, he contemplates his own river of blood, in which he is a delicate island, despite his organs, his hard bones, his even harder principles, which would like to delude him.

For him the skeleton, the prison-frame of man's eager heart and hypersensitive nerves, symbolizes the emotional ossification which the poet must escape. In praise of childhood he once pointed out that a drawing by the eight-year-old Louis XIII was indistinguishable from one by the eight-year-old son of a New Caledonia cannibal, thus proving that the French boy of 1609 was as old as humanity, or two hundred and fifty thousand years old. But a few years later "he is merely thirty-one, he has become an individual, he is merely a king of France, an *impasse* from which he never escaped. What is worse than being finished?" For Michaux adult, finished, dead are but different ways of saying the same thing; and he concludes: "The worst criticism against Aristotle is still this: that he was definitively Aristotle. Before dying one becomes all bone."

—*Gisèle Freund.*

Henri Michaux—"opposed to the rigid."

Opposed to the rigid there is the fluid which the poet finds and liberates in sickness, travel, and magic. Painfully sensitive to all that is unpleasant, he undergoes a series of ordeals and exercises his neurotic obsessions in his poetry; hence the pathological show of violence of many pages beside the Kafka-like timidity of his Mr. Plume. And yet Henri Michaux himself is such a deceptively gentle, gracious man, distinguished in every gesture and every articulation; perhaps this merely proves that his catharsis is effective.

Certain of these poems in prose or in irregular verse strongly suggest satire: "The Spermatozoon's Heaven," for instance, or the one about the brutalized child martyrs reared by the Hacs in order to be sure of having "great artists, poets, but unfortunately also assassins, and especially reformers." But the satire is merely incidental, a by-product of a particular anguish projected into words.

Some day Michaux will be known in America as the great painter he is. If he worked on canvas and in oils rather than in water-colors and on paper he would doubtless already have taken his rightful place beside such as Paul Klee and Miró. As a painter he has hauntingly portrayed the same Parpue, the Darelette, "Hypedruches with black tails," and all that fantastic zoology that figures in his poems.

Justin O'Brien, professor of French at Columbia University, is the translator of André Gide's "Journals."

Mystic & Classic

THE NECESSARY ANGEL. Essays on Reality and the Imagination. By Wallace Stevens. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 176 *pp.* $3.

NIGHT SKY. By Bernice Kenyon. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 75 *pp.* $2.50.

By GERARD PREVIN MEYER

TO THE diligent searcher after Stevensiana the material of "The Necessary Angel" will come as no surprise. Except for the brief introduction these essays were all published, at varying intervals during the years 1942-1951, as contributions to symposia or as magazine articles or, in one case, as a museum pamphlet. But they have been hard to get at, and it is a good thing to have them all together. It is a good thing that Wallace Stevens has come to the conclusion that "The Necessary Angel" is necessary.

It seems to exemplify the high seriousness with which this poet approaches his art. In fact, "The Necessary Angel" may well take its place—beside much of his later poetry—as the Credo of Wallace Stevens: his *mystique*. Mario Praz once said, "Mysticism and art are different expressions of the same reality." In the second essay of this book, Stevens develops this notion. He describes—and it is clear that this experience has come to him directly, just as the mystical experience has come to others—"the moment of exaltation that the poet experiences when he writes a poem that completely accomplished his purpose." This happens through "the transformation, not to say apotheosis, accomplished by the poem."

The imagination, of course, is deeply involved in all this: the imagination whose "peculiarity" is "nobility." It is the imagination which creates the poem, and which must be satisfied by the poem it creates: "the poet finds a sanction for life in poetry that satisfies the imagination." The reality that imagination reveals, creates, through poetry, is suggested in the course of his remarks on Marianne Moore, when he says, "Nothing illustrates the importance of poetry better than this possibility that within it there may yet be found a reality adequate to the profound necessities of life today or for that matter any day."

These papers "were written to be

Gerard Previn Meyer is the author of "Louder Than the Drum" and "For George Herbert."

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spoken and this affects their character"; but that is precisely why they are so readable. Wallace Stevens listened to these words as he wrote them, just as he listens to the sound of the poems that he writes. As much as his master, Mallarmé, he has an interest in and understanding of what words can say by their music: "Above everything else, poetry is words; and . . . words, above everything else, are, in poetry, sounds . . . A poet's words are of things that do not exist without the words. . . . Poetry is a revelation in words by means of the words."

As for what this revelation brings—a quotation from the last essay in "The Necessary Angel" seems apropos. The passage is printed as prose, but I have dared to write it as poetry. For if this isn't the work of the poetic imagination what is it?

The world about us would be desolate except
For the world within us. There is the same interchange
Between these two worlds that there is between one art
And another: migratory passings to and fro,
Quickenings, Promethean liberations, discoveries.

* * *

WITH "Night Sky," her third volume of poems, Bernice Kenyon joins that select company of latter-day poets who have written upon water, as she puts it, "not in derision, but with gravity." Like Elinor Wylie (and, before Miss Wylie, Lionel Johnson and A. E. Housman), Miss Kenyon informs her writing with the sense of loss; and, like her predecessors, she clothes this poignant theme in a garment of classical austerity. The result, except to readers who are looking for a different sort of poetry (in the latest fashion of coterie cleverness, say, or in the presently demoded style of surrealistic violence), may well lead one to exclaim—with the poet herself—"How strange and marvelous to find / Earth's beauty different, but no less!"

This is not to say that Miss Kenyon's poetry is not open to challenge on *philosophical* grounds. When she writes, in the vein of Lucretius, "Infinite careless winds swing over heaven, / And the rapt stars await no destiny," only a willing suspension of belief can reconcile to Miss Kenyon's lines the reader who is wholeheartedly with the devotional poetry of T. S. Eliot and Robert Lowell. And on poetic grounds one might oppose that the diction is at times rather too austere, that the element of surprise or shock is too rarely met with, and that the range of imagery is too restricted, too pastoral perhaps.

In either case, however, one would be applying the wrong criteria. The measure of Miss Kenyon's strength is not her belief or disbelief, but the way she has reacted to it in her poetry. And the test of her style in poetry is whether it presents within the poem a resolution of the tensions that are implicit in her theme. On these two counts one must congratulate Miss Kenyon on achieving in the fifty "dark poems" of "Night Sky" a high degree of artistry: indeed, within the limits she has set for herself her virtuosity rarely falters.

These poems display, together with the concision and purity of tone that one expects of a classical style, a richness of technical resources. Through the time-tattered devices of alliteration, rhyme, parallelism, and plain repetition, the poet sets up echoes which reverberate in the mind's ear with the effect of incantation. It is an incantation against mortality, the old enemy—and it succeeds as well as any, and better than most of the defenses against mortality which Miss Kenyon calls up (such as the illusion of possession, or love under the shadow of time passing). Since everything recurs—so says the incantation—then nothing entirely perishes.

"I have heard a sombre music always, under / The mind's bright reason," the poet writes. This music is both somber and bright.

—*Gorge Platt Lynes.*

Marianne Moore—"an experimentalist."

Poetry Notes

COLLECTED POEMS. By Marianne Moore. Macmillan. $3. The nature of modern poetry may be examined and its validity tested in this, the "Collected Poems" of Marianne Moore. One of the most exciting and brilliant poets of our time, Miss Moore has achieved prominence chiefly as an experimentalist, but, unlike many of her contemporaries, she has always known what she is about. This volume contains the "Selected Poems" (1935), "What Are Years" (1941), "Nevertheless" (1944), and a handful of hitherto unpublished poems.

A modernist, Miss Moore is unequivocally a contemporary, whose satirical disquisitions are sharp, elliptical, and unexpected. With an Aristotelian detachment she makes astringent and precise observations in stanzas whose rhymes and rhythms are experimental achievements. In writing of animals and insects it seems as if she had her specimens under glass, and so fastidious is her microscopic examination, truths that seem to be suppressed suddenly are revealed as finalities in language new to the inner ear. There is an austere perfection in Miss Moore's speech as the imaginative image imposes itself in the lines she writes. She is the flawless worker, whose poems are individual attainments; gathered together they make a many-faceted appearance.

Miss Moore is a difficult poet to read; she cannot be read in haste. Not destined to be popular, she still is not obscure. In "In Distrust of Merits" she has written one of the finest poems to come out of the late war. She vows, "We'll/ never hate black,

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 445

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 445 will be found in the next issue.

J GXQI XH NXYQXO SJO

GX YDQ EXPA XOMF XOSI,

KRD J KJG KXXA SJO WX

XO NXYQXOYOW NIXNMI'Q

BYOGQ HXP JOF MIOWDU

XH DYBI.

—LXUO BRPPJF.

Answer to No. 444

Motorists, as a class, are not averse to public discussion of their troubles.

—ROBERT BENCHLEY.

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white, red, yellow, Jew,/ Gentile, Untouchable . . ." and after an insight, terrible for its inferences, "There never was a war that was/not inward," she concludes with

Beauty is everlasting
and dust is for a time.

ABEL ANDERS. By Frank Borden Hanes. Farrar, Straus & Young. $2.75. The art of poetry is distinct from the art of prose. Each has its separate disciplines, and to fuse the two requires resources and experience only a novitiate with courage would have the temerity to exploit.

Frank Borden Hanes, in his first book, "Abel Anders," has not entirely made a union of story telling and poetry. His novel in verse is concerned with Abel, the youngest son of a mountain family in Tate County, presumably in North Carolina, and his rebellion against a way of living, his heartbreak and attainment in college, his ruthlessness in acquiring a business, and his return to the mountains out of spiritual necessity. There is a proper ordering of incidents in the four sections; there is admirable delineation of character, there are graphic situations in the small; but the novel as novel doesn't ring whole and round. As poetry it is as rugged as the mountain country it describes, and its pacing is in keeping with the detailed episodes of the development. The lyrical vein is slight, yet there are flashes of insight in a long lyrical passage, but since no portion of the book may be quoted, this proscription also favors several lines of ordinary statement.

Mr. Hanes has an exciting talent for writing. When he has resolved the torments within himself he may be able to write poetry free of prose or prose free of poetry. He may yet master both disciplines and fuse them into art.

ATLANTIC CITY CANTATA. By Hugh Chisholm. Farrar, Straus & Young. $3. This book is a potpourri of choral verses, vaudeville jingles, Mother Goose rhymes, and nonsense doggerel, set in a dramatic interlude with the famous boardwalk as a symbol of man's desires and disillusions in this trying age. The protagonists are synthetic papier-maché representations, whose lives and thinking are denoted in duets, trios, arias, and choruses in this libretto.

The cantata consists of well over one hundred verses, mainly written in clipped, sharp meters of epigrammatic force. The idiom is often deplorable

(*Continued on page* 24)

Beverages. *With the sands of anno 1951 running low but not necessarily dry, many a reader's thoughts veer to volumes of libational lore apposite to the moment. The following, all of them of this year's vintage and some of them still moist from the press, deserve citation for their information, inspiration, and challenge. Lawton Mackall, restaurant editor of* Gourmet *magazine, does the reviewing.*

Detailed Dionysian Data

WINES OF FRANCE. By Alexis Lichine. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 326 *pp.* $3.75.

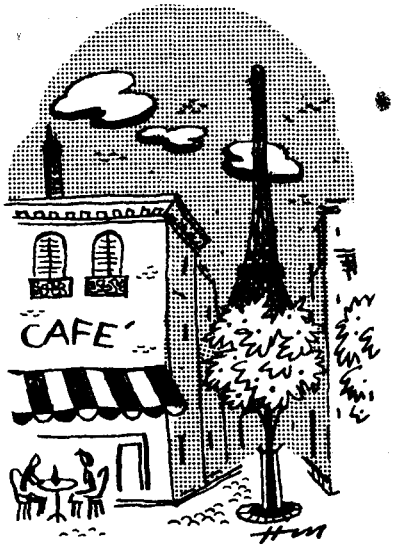
FRANK SCHOONMAKER'S DICTIONARY OF WINES. Edited by Tom Marvel. New York: Hastings House. 120 *pp.* $2.50.

By Lawton Mackall

WINE growers are farmers, and few of them possess capital enough to permit them to wait long for a cash return on their crops. Hence the vast majority of the world's wines, including most of those produced in France, are consumed when less than two years old. Indeed, Europe's *vins ordinaires,* made under regulations less strict than those in force in the United States, lack basic soundness and if kept much longer would be on their way to vinegar. Even the classic wines of the old world are definitely bad in unlucky-weather years. If the would-be enjoyer of fine wines is to escape lamentable disappointments he must be well informed as to vineyards, vintages, and vintners. In this admirably readable book, which is reinforced with regional maps, lists of growers, and tables of years, Mr. Lichine—himself a grower and shipper, as well as importer—undertakes to supply that information.

As would be expected emphasis is upon France's wines of renown—protected nowadays by "controlled appellations," and the choicest of them authenticated to the nth degree by estate bottling. Such assurances for the consumer have long been the rule as regards the classified Claret and Sauternes châteaux of Bordeaux; which vineyard manors, comprising extensive acreages strongly held, traditionally play the prestige game, bottling the vintages rated good enough to bear their labels and disposing of off vintages anonymously in the bulk market.

Burgundy he characterizes as "the wine democracy of France" because of the fact that the famed vineyards of the Côte d'Or are parceled into bits and pieces belonging to a swarm of owners. Until recently the wine-lover who wished to learn these wines by drinking them could only in rare instances be certain of the identity of what he was sampling. Though labeled Pommard or Chambertin, it might be two-thirds Algerian or, if the shipper were disposed to be generous, from some Burgundy vineyard of lesser distinction than the one claimed. These prevalent frauds brought retribution at the time of the Depression of the 1930's and led to a revolution in ethics under a code set up by the Marquis d'Angerville of Volnay and the author's friend Henri Gouges, to whom he pays glowing tribute. Now there is classification and certification and more and more estate bottling. Mr. Lichine is himself an estate bottler at the Domaine Mugnier, which, located in Chambolle-Musigny, owns portions of the vineyards of Musigny, of Bonnes Mares, of Les Amoureuses, and an acre of Clos Vougeot, besides possessing other select Côte de Nuits holdings. He speaks with proper respect of such eminent neighbors as the Comte de Vogüé and Louis Latour, dynasts in this Dionysian "democracy." The remarkableness of the Hospice de Beaune, its architecture, its twenty-



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eight vineyard properties, and its annual auction are fully accounted for. Southern Burgundy the abundant is offset by Chablis the chronically scarce with the explanation that only one-third of the land is being worked while the other two-thirds rest;" an outstanding Chablis vineyard may need as much as twenty years of restorative repose.

Despite Mr. Lichine's entrenched Burgundianism he is more than fair toward the immemorial wines of the Rhone: rich, deep red Côte Rotie ("Roasted Slope") with truffle and raspberry overtones from its Syrah vines; brownish-tinged Hermitage Rouge and the even greater Hermitage Blanc; faster-maturing Châteauneuf-du-Pape, blend of divers varieties; Tavel's peerless pink wine from Grenache grapes just above Avignon. The Loire's lengthy collection of charmers, still and sparkling, is toured through with no protracted stops. Of Alsatian wines he thinks but poorly. (To his statement that they "suffer from the traditional comparison with the great German wines, just as does a box lunch when compared to a five-course dinner," he adds, "but it's nice to have both"—which will hardly allay umbrage on the part of devotees of these wines.) In Provence he hails a roseate wine of Cassis, ignoring the whites of Cassis which have long been the concomitants of bouillabaisse in nearby Marseille. Similarly in his graphic account of the Champagne country he singles out the comparatively new Mailly co-operative as his pet producer. And in the section on Armagnac brandy the Marquis de Montesquiou gets the glory.

Our merchant-author would be silly if he didn't tuck in these plugs, having gone to the enormous trouble of assembling his professional knowledge in book form for handy consultation by all and sundry. Literary assistance by William E. Massee is divulged by the title page; no secret, either, is publisher-good-lifer Alfred A. Knopf's personal pride in this beautifully gotten-up volume. Confronted by Mr. Knopf's clarion encomium on the jacket, which sounds a note of exultation in a frazzled world, the only minutiae that the present reviewer hoists an eyebrow at are (a) unexplained inclusion of Les Gaudichots among outstanding vineyards of Vosne-Romanée and (b) assertion that many firms still call their best cognacs Napoleon Brandy.

* * *

THE OLD complaint about dictionaries—that they would be better reading if they didn't change the subject so often—hardly applies to this one, which, easy on the eye and teasy to curiosity, sticks to its oenological theme with cumulative interest regardless of whether alphabetical neighbors are related or not. Conscientiously global, it salutes productive zeal in Canada's Niagara Peninsula, in Australia, in South Africa, in South America (Argentina for volume, Chile for quality), in Algeria and Morocco, but leaves no doubt as to the supremacy of France; followed by Germany with her multiplicity of whites, the best of them unsurpassed in flowery finesse, and all of them invested with labels which to a timid wine-lover are runic mysteries. This lexicon's elucidation of Teutonic topography and terminology will earn the gratitude of many.

Italy, teeming with diversity, is a frequent bobber-up in these pages, stringing her garland of wines from Piedmont down to the Marsala tip of Sicily. Also, recurringly represented are Spain, Hungary, Greece, and Portugal. It is to be doubted, though, that the squires of the *quintas* of the Upper Douro will relish the definition of fortified wine as "wine to which grape spirit (brandy) has been added, increasing natural alcoholic content. Ex., Port, Sherry, Madeira." (Those Port viniculturists employ the brandy to arrest fermentation at a point where natural grape sweetness and natural grape acidity are deemed to be in balance.) Switzerland's salubrious wines, though treated with comparative brevity, are given full credit for their distinctiveness as proud independents in the wine world.

Of American wine regions those for which Schoonmaker esteem is expressed are the Finger Lakes district of New York, the isles of Lake Erie near Sandusky, and the northern counties of California in the vicinity of San Francisco Bay. As is this well known selector's wont, he stresses his insistence upon wines named for the grape from which they are made—that is to say, varietal wines, as distinguished from so-called "generic" wines such as California Claret, Burgundy, Chablis, etc. In this connection it is noteworthy that two eminent California wineries with which Mr. Schoonmaker is associated were winners of twenty-three awards at the California State Fair (September 1951), fifteen of these honors being for varietals and eight for generics including California Claret, Burgundy, and Chablis.

This engaging book incorporates a fourteen-page dictionary of alcoholic beverages other than wine and is supplemented with reference lists of classic French vineyards, table of European and California wine grapes, and practical suggestions as to the serving of wines.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

ALL ABOUT FOOD

Blanche McKeown, of Memphis, Tennessee, asks you to identify the stories briefly summarized below and the characters in them who were somehow concerned with food. Allowing five points for each correct answer, you may consider yourself unusual if you score eighty or better, usual if you make seventy-five, and most unusual if you fail to make fifty. Answers on page 24.

1. This New England schoolmaster was overwhelmed at the abundance of dainties on the Sunday night table of a buxom young lady.
2. A poor boy who was the ward of the parish scandalized everyone when he held out his porringer and said, "Please, sir, I want some more."
3. This Norman knight gave a dinner whose main purpose was to hold to ridicule the dress and manners of his Saxon guests.
4. At a heavenly fish-fry the tables are covered with piles of biscuits, corn bread, cooked fish, with two large churns filled with boiled custard.
5. This hairy hunter sold his birthright to his wily brother for a mess of pottage.
6. Three curious characters were huddled together at one corner of a large tea table when a little English girl joined them.
7. A crippled boy, held high on his father's shoulder over a Christmas table, cried, "God bless us, every one!"
8. Four young sisters, whose father was away at war, took their Christmas breakfast to a poor family of the neighborhood.
9. When a lubberly lad let the sty catch fire and burn nine new-farrowed pigs, the world gained a new delicacy.
10. This beautiful little girl found herself in serious trouble when she ate the porridge belonging to a bear.

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Beverages Notes

BOTTOMS UP. By Ted Saucier. Greystone Press. $7.50. Handsomely schemed, this outsize opus offers alphabetically 780 mixed drinks, short and long, classical and curious. If some of them strike one as more confective than concoctive, the inference would seem to be that the bachelor host will construct them for the amazement of his lady friends. Speaking of the latter, this volume carries a dozen full-page portrayals in color by as many prominent illustrators, who caught their subjects at what must have been a warmer time of year. Lively small spot decorations by Russell Patterson keep the elegant typography unstuffy. As to the drinks themselves, a large number are credited to personalities of the press, screen, stage, and air-waves, and to well-known hotels and restaurants on both sides of the Atlantic including the old Waldorf of the days when Tom gin was in flower. The mint julep is represented by fifteen versions, thus deferring to "crush" and "anti-crush" sensibilities. Bloody Mary is supplemented by a Bloody Bloody Mary, and a special Errol Flynn Resuscitator. The ultimate in Martini dryness is a recipe originated by and named for the late Lucius Boomer wherein the vermouth is administered to the ice but ousted before the gin is poured in. The Waldorf's present Claude C. Philippe contributes a chapter on wining and dining.

THE BARTENDER'S BOOK. By Jack Townsend and Tom Moore McBride. Viking Press. 148 pp. $2.95. Mr. Townsend is president of the Bartenders' Union of New York, Local 15, A.F.L.; Mr. McBride is his prophet. Together, on the basis of a questionnaire to barmen all over the United States and Canada, they report that fewer than fifty drinks are served with any regularity, and only about a hundred more can be reckoned as actively extant. This attested total comprises their book, which is divided into working categories, each prefaced by historical data. Of major interest is the roster of the forty most-made drinks, listed in the order of their reported popularity—nowadays as compared with 1945. The Manhattan remains the top favorite, with the Martini in the No. 2 spot and scoring notable gains; followed by the Daiquiri. Surprisingly, the Whisky Sour has overtaken the Old Fashioned. Indeed, upsets are rife in this tipple-chase, warranting caution on the part of bettors.

THE HOUR. By Bernard DeVoto. Houghton Mifflin. 84 pp. $2. Vigorously vocal Mr. DeVoto scorns to extend his lip over any drink other than bonded whiskey neat, preferably rye, or an oliveless and well-nigh colorless Martini. But he is willing to discuss, and does, the types of drinks that are anathema to him. This reviewer is reminded of a passage in Boswell anent Johnsonian reaction to Gothic architecture as instanced by the ruins of the abbeys of Oseney and Rewley, near Oxford. "After at least half an hour's silence, Johnson said, 'I viewed them with indignation!' " Our pundit of beverage architecture for the mystic hour of six isn't that taciturn in his antipathy to blended liquors (even blends of straights), Manhattans, and any drink involving fruit juices or liqueurs. In his ire against the sugar-cane and all its works he even rages at rum as a "sweet" drink, which is pure hallucination. Frankly, I am alarmed lest Paul Revere and fellow tea tossers, irked at the affront to New England's pet medicine, rise from their graves and dunk Mr. DeVoto in Boston Harbor; which would be an awkward predicament for a Pulitzer Prize winner who rages so engagingly.

—*From "Scotch Whisky."*

SCOTCH WHISKY. Compiled by Marshall J. Robb. Edited by Archie R. Trumbull. Dutton. $3. Ransackers of old bookstores searching for the small scarce opus "Whisky" by Aeneas MacDonald (Edinburgh)—hitherto the only thing of its kind for laymen—may now desist, for here is a book which surpasses that on all counts and which is illustrated with photographs of the workings and scenic surroundings of Scottish distilleries, and further embellished with woodcuts old and new. Anyone whose heart possesses Caledonian cockles will feel a glow in them as he noses this peat-smoky posy.

THE CALIFORNIA WINE INDUSTRY 1830-1895. *By Vincent P. Carosso. University of California Press.* $3.75. Though it makes no mention of him this book answers the puzzlement of Richard Henry Dana in "Two Years Before the Mast" as to why Californians unenterprisingly bought wine from Massachusetts instead of producing their own. Actually, the first commercial vineyard (as distinct from the sacramental vineyards of the Spanish missions) had already been planted in Los Angeles by a skilled Frenchman, Jean Louis Vignes. By the time (1840) Easterners were absorbing Dana's narrative Southern Californians were consuming Vignes's wine and brandy, and when San Francisco boomed with the Gold Rush it paid fancy prices for Vignes's table grapes. Had those swarming fortune hunters been trained viticulturists,

(*Continued on page* 23)

The Summers Are Modest on Squam

By Robert Magidoff

The summers are modest on Squam.
Their sky is disarmingly clear.
Like maidens on tiptoe they come.
As maidens they can disappear.

Is this why the winters on Squam
Are bitter, vindictive, austere?
Like witches avenging, they come
And grudgingly then disappear.

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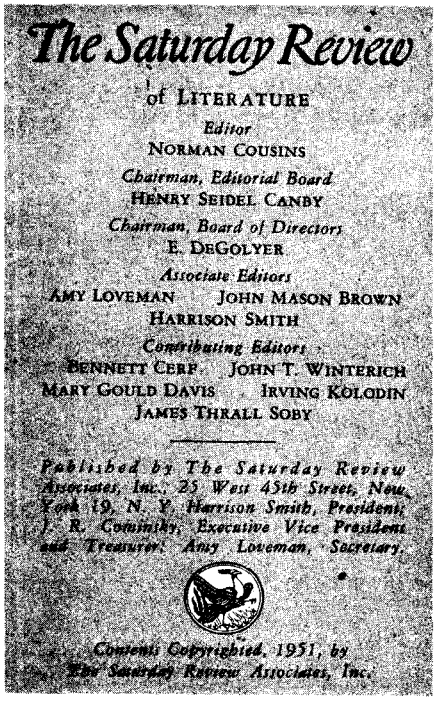
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Published by The Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Amy Loveman, Secretary.
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Religion & the Schools

SOMETHING happened last week that may hurt American education perhaps more than any single thing in 1951. And 1951 was not an easy year for American education.

In New York State the Board of Regents decided to make an omission: high-school examinations on biology would no longer contain questions relating to the germ theory of disease. The Regents did this in order to avoid offense to believers in Christian Science.

It should be made clear that this action was taken not through the initiative of the Christian Science Church, which has scrupulously avoided any pressure to impose its own views on public education. The Regents' action followed passage by the New York State Legislature of a law exempting students from instruction in health and hygiene that may run counter to their religion. Comparable legislation has been passed by nine other states, but this is the first instance, to our knowledge, of a state penalizing the education of the entire community because of beliefs held by part of that community. The Regents did not merely exempt Christian Scientists from part of an examination. They "exempted" all students, imposing on the public-at-large the standards and strictures of a particular sect.

The implications are as startling as they are critical. If the germ theory of disease is to be ruled off examination papers, isn't it only a short step away to rule it out of biology classes altogether? What is to stop the same indiscriminate principle from being used in university education, supported in whole or part by public funds? What about medical schools themselves? If the principle is sound for high-school students why is it less sound for medical school students? Is it altogether far-fetched to ask whether publicly supported clinics or hospitals may at some time deprive all patients of modern medical care on the same grounds? If this seems to be stretching the possible dangers beyond all meaning let us ask whether there is not some relationship between the study of knowledge and the use of knowledge.

Apart from biology and medicine, does the action of the Board of Regents mean that the domain of knowledge for all is to be made subordinate to the domain of religious belief for some? What if some parents reject the Copernican theory in the name of religion? And, since each man must define religion for himself, what is there to stop any person from claiming exemption from any examination or course of study because he says it runs counter to his faith?

For the past eighteen years we have been shocked by totalitarian states which tried to make knowledge conform to political dogma. First, it was Nazism, which came up with blood theories to justify the master race concept. More recently, we were disturbed by the Lysenko controversy over eugenics, with the state attempting to pour science into a political mold. Shouldn't we be even more shocked by an American Board of Regents which has canceled out from its own evaluation procedures the greatest advance in the history of medical knowledge?

Does our argument imply any lack of respect for faith? Certainly not. In fact, we need to remind ourselves that democracy has some articles of faith of its own. These articles are none the less important because they lack a formal theology. And among those articles of faith is the right of every child to a free public education which is as competent and complete as it is humanly possible for that education to be. If the expanding world of knowledge is believed by some to come into conflict with an aspect of religion, then it is not the obligation of the school to make the adjustment. Another article of democratic faith is that every parent who wishes private religious education for his child has a right to such an education, so long as proper standards are maintained. In this way the rights of both majority and minority are protected.

We are not arguing here for the total exclusion of religion from the public schools. The schools cannot afford to ignore such a basic aspect of individual and community life in America. But there is a difference between education *about* religion and education *in* religion. In American religion, as in everything else, our strength is in its diversity. It is important for our young people to understand this diversity and to know something about the moral and ethical as well as spiritual values of American faith.

BUT IF religion becomes the yardstick for other courses of study what happens when the yardsticks clash? Isn't it likely that the moment the school doors give way to outside pressures the strongest pressure will prevail? Isn't there a danger that the religion of the majority could become dominant in education over the minorities? Our Constitutional guarantees of freedom of worship are based not so much upon the need to protect religion from non-believers in or out of government, as upon the need to protect religions from one another. By giving religious authority an established place of its own outside government authority, the Constitution makers provided the best possible atmosphere for the exercise and growth of free religious worship.

Alexis de Tocqueville, whose "Democracy in America" after a century is still one of the standard works on our government and our institutions, was keenly interested in the place of religion in this country. Profoundly religious, he was impressed by the "self-restraint" of the clergy of all denominations in standing aloof from secular affairs. "In America," he wrote, "religion is a distinct sphere, in which the priest is sovereign, but out of which he cares never to go."

De Tocqueville looked elsewhere in the world and saw strong threats to religion because it was "in danger of falling into the hands of the government." Rulers and political leaders, using the pretext of advancing the cause of religion through official state policy, were actually advancing their own political power. When the boundaries between Church and State were dissolved, most often it was the Church that suffered. "The rulers . . . get more and more hold upon the will of those by whom doctrines are expounded; they deprive the clergy of their property and pay them salaries; they divert to their own use the influence of the priesthood, they make them their own ministers, often their servants, and by this alliance with religion they reach the inner depths of the soul of man."

The case for keeping Church and school apart must be made upon educational and religious grounds both.

—N. C.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"The Unrecognized Power"

SIR: The article by Alan Paton ["The Unrecognized Power," *SRL* Nov. 24] is a close and wonderful statement of the sources of power in our lifetime. It is something of a triumph to have published these lines, with their declaring for the fierce peace which can at any moment be made by our own imagination—our love—the durable fire.

Will there be reprints? I feel that a belief central to many people—to all those who are not cut off from themselves—has been expressed here; and I should like to do what I can for the article, as I hope to do what I can for these meanings.

MURIEL RUKEYSER.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: It is impossible not to be touched by the power, sincerity, and good writing of Alan Paton's contribution. I am, moreover, fully prepared to accept his statement that the root (one root?) of the present crisis is a "revolt of man against domination, against dominating and being dominated." (I prefer to call this a demand for *equality of status*.)

Yet the weakness of Mr. Paton's admirable piece, it seems to me, is his failure to explain just why people revolting against "domination" should turn to Soviet Communism for release. Here is the greatest single source of naked "domination" on earth. Here are a group of men who despise the rights of any human personality, including their own, and who daily sacrifice personality to their own lust for power and, to a "democratic" future—once enough obstructive personalities have been eliminated. Here is a country whose present spokesmen openly preach hatred instead of the love dear to Mr. Paton. Yet he states as "one of the truths of this age" that "any denial of the rights of personality, any dilution of the principle, any delaying of the recognition, no matter with what protested justification, leads to the spread of Communism, and to its identification with liberation, salvation, and freedom."

Why? How is it possible for anyone to spread the notion that the fire will be less hot than the frying pan? How does Mr. Paton explain the fact that the Kremlin gets away with the most blatant political swindle of all time? Could it be because people like Mr. Paton persist in stating that people will fall for it instead of insisting that they observe its falsity for themselves?

EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER.

Washington, D. C.

Anglo-American Relations

SIR: I want you to know how greatly your special issue "America and the Partnership with Britain" [*SRL* Oct. 13] was appreciated throughout the United Kingdom. I have every reason to believe that this issue was equally well received in the United States. The list of contributors was particularly impressive.

As Director of Public Relations to the British Information Services in New York I have been intimately concerned with Anglo-American relations, literally on a day-to-day basis, for well over a decade. During this entire period the editorial staff of *The Saturday Review* have made a very great contribution to a better understanding between our two countries, an understanding which is, I am firmly convinced, vital to the future of the free world. The issue in question, together with another recent issue entitled "America and the Mind of Europe," have highlighted this contribution.

Long may you continue this good work, for in this sorely tried world Anglo-American amity and trust are indeed "the last best hope on earth."

C. B. ORMEROD.

New York, N. Y.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"As long as Carthage has money enough to buy good mercenaries I don't see why we should worry about Rome."

"Acceptance of Calamity"

SIR: Despite Edgar Ansel Mowrer's good letter in *SRL* Nov. 10, we still deny the charge that in the last analysis George F. Kennan's book "American Diplomacy 1900-1950" "advocates nothing better than the rational acceptance of calamity."

If any state of the world short of a "warless international order" is to be defined as calamitous, then we think Mr. Kennan might agree—although we don't speak for him—that the calamity should be accepted rationally. But it seems to us that Mr. Kennan's point is that the really valid choice offered practical diplomats is not between "total war" (utterly calamitous) and "total peace." Indeed, one of the very faults Mr. Kennan has been criticizing in American diplomacy is that our diplomats have been in some measure guided by just such a conception of the alternatives—with rather disastrous if not calamitous results.

Mr. Mowrer does not prove that a diplomacy oriented along Mr. Kennan's line must necessarily lead to a "whole series of 'Koreas'," although he more or less assumes this as a fact. Furthermore, must such an eventuality be an ultimate calamity? Would it be more calamitous, for example, than the whole past series of total wars?

In short, Mr. Mowrer seems to feel that the practical business of diplomacy must be conceived as involving stark choices between the world that "is" and the world that "ought" to be. We deny that to deny this is *merely* an acceptance of calamity; we assert that it is, indeed, rational.

JAMES M. EICHELBERGER,
Univ. of Chicago Press.

Chicago, Ill.

"Never"

SIR: Please add to Melville Cane's "Never":

Never try to roister with an oyster,
A bivalve is a quiet sort of bird;
He'll burrow back into his muddy cloister,
Like kids should be, he's seen but never heard.

MABEL C. SIMMONS.

New Orleans, La.

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Seeing Things

THE COMEDY THAT CAME BACK

THE season of 1926-27 was a good one even by the standards of the Twenties. By present-day standards it was downright incredible. A thumbing of Burns Mantle's "Best Plays" for that year and a glance at the list of productions now running in New York is enough to put more lead in the heart of a theatregoer than ever weighted down a certain jumping frog in Calaveras County.

Among the offerings made available to local ticket-purchasers twenty-five years ago were "Broadway," "Saturday's Children," "Chicago," "The Road to Rome," "Daisy Mame," "The Play's the Thing," "Ned McCobb's Daughter," "The Silver Cord," "The Captive," "The Second Man," "Juarez and Maximilian," "White Wings," "The Little Clay Cart," "The Constant Nymph," "Spread Eagle," "Pinwheel," "The Bad Man," "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (without music and Carol Channing), "Lady Alone," and "Sour Grapes." A fabulous catalogue, you must admit, and one made all the more impressive when you realize that it also included Ethel Barrymore's great success in "The Constant Wife," that comedy by Somerset Maugham in which Katharine Cornell is now to be seen.* Miss Cornell, by the way, did not appear on Broadway during that season a quarter of a century ago. She was touring in "The Green Hat," winning tributes everywhere for her impersonation, as Ashton Stevens put it, of the "brooding, self-pitying, burning lady of Mr. Arlen's golden slum."

I touch upon the past, not to enjoy the delights of melancholy, but because it is from the past that Mr. Maugham's comedy comes. The question of time reminds me that once I heard Gertrude Stein deliver a talk on "The Nowness of the Now," a thesis which none of her hearers disputed. Were Miss Stein with us today to discuss any play revived after twenty-five years, she would have to change her topic to "The Nowness of the Past." That is, of course, if the past retains any "nowness."

That Mr. Maugham's comedy, about the wife of a Harley Street surgeon who knows her husband is having an affair with her best friend and thereafter feels free to have an affair herself, is slightly dated I cannot deny, nor does it seem to me to matter. Seeing a play which was once contemporary when in certain respects it is no longer so can be a very agreeable experience. It all depends upon the play. Granting that most scripts written for the theatre age as swiftly as today's news, there are some which, though they may no longer speak for the present, continue to speak to it. Mr. Maugham's "The Constant Wife" is one of these.

What is it that is dated about it? What is it that remains untarnished by time? And in both cases why? Unless I misread my newspapers, the passage of twenty-five years has not made all marriages blissful. We do not have to turn to either Hollywood or Broadway to find instances of diminishing affections, domestic crises, and infidelity. Our papers bulge with juicy stories about squabbling couples of every kind and class.

If these stories make for hot reading, the reason is that the unhappy people about whom they are written are uninhibited by restraints, uncontrolled by "manners," and unaware of their own vulgarities. Their misfortunes, their angers, their fights, their reconciliations, their violent charges, although genuine, are hard to take seriously. The stuffs of farce are in them, not comedy. By making a travesty of marriage no less than of behavior they end up by being funny. At least they seem so to the casual reader. Yet laughable as they are, the laughter they create is not the product of wit.

Mr. Maugham's characters belong to an almost vanished universe. They are ladies and gentlemen, if I may employ two words so rarely used nowadays that they have come close to losing their meaning. This in itself is bound to make them appear somewhat quaint. There are other ways in which they show that they belong to other days. Their hope is to avoid scenes rather than to make them. Whatever their morals may be, their manners are impeccable. Their personal affairs are their major preoccupation. If they follow their passions, they hide their emotions for they are sophisticates to whom drawing-room decorum is a religion. The outside world neither threatens nor concerns them. They exude a sense of security known at present to few mortals. Only their marriages are imperiled, and these at moments of crisis which pass swiftly.

INSTEAD of finding a visit to such an outmoded world unwelcome, I must admit I find it very pleasant. "The Constant Wife" is not the equal of such of Mr. Maugham's comedies as "The Circle" and "Our Betters." It is, too, a little slow in getting under way. Nonetheless it is beyond dispute the work of a man who is not only a playwright but a writer. His dialogue is uncursed with flabbiness. It is lean and pointed. Its phrasing has a delectable accuracy. It is also witty though not stridently so.

Mr. Maugham is a realist, disenchanted and sardonic. His plea is for a single standard of morality, and in a last act written twenty-five years

—Vandamm.

Brian Aherne, Katharine Cornell, Grace George—"witty though not stridently so."

* *THE CONSTANT WIFE, by W. Somerset Maugham. Directed by Guthrie McClintic. Setting by Donald Oenslager. A Katharine Cornell Production. With Katharine Cornell, Brian Aherne, Grace George, John Emery, Gertrude Musgrove, Eva Leonard-Boyne, Claude Horton, Nan Martin, and Liam Sullivan. At the National Theatre, New York City. Opened December 8, 1951.*

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RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL
Showplace of the Nation
Rockefeller Center

DORIS DAY · DANNY THOMAS
FRANK LOVEJOY · PATRICE WYMORE

"I'LL SEE YOU IN MY DREAMS"
with JAMES GLEASON
Directed by MICHAEL CURTIZ
A Warner Bros. Picture

THE MUSIC HALL'S GREAT CHRISTMAS STAGE SHOW

"THE NATIVITY"—Joyous Yuletide pageant . . . and "OPEN HOUSE"—Produced by Leonidoff . . . settings by James Stewart Morcom . . . with the Corps de Ballet, Choral Ensemble, Rockettes and Symphony Orchestra directed by Raymond Paige.

ago he shows a courage that few dramatists now writing would dare to summon. The wife in his play goes off on a six-weeks' trip with her lover, assured by her unfaithful yet indignant husband that he will take her back. That is Mr. Maugham's happy ending. It is scarcely of a Sunday school variety or even of the kind with which comedies by less audacious authors conclude today.

In many respects the brightness, the sophistication, and the gaiety of Mr. Maugham's comedy are admirably communicated in the current revival. Donald Oenslager's interior is an enchanting room, a paradise for worldlings, charmingly inhabited by Katharine Cornell, Grace George, and Brian Aherne. Miss Cornell is lovely to look at and has an all-conquering fascination. She seems genuinely glad to be taking a vacation from tragedy. Though she does not play Constance Middleton as a born comedienne would play her, Miss Cornell has an acceptable substitute to offer for a comedienne's artifices and manner. This is the contagious gaiety which possesses her mind and heart and shines through her face. Her Constance is a glamorous woman, light-hearted, fact-facing, all-knowing. She is a Candida who has mislaid her Bible and wandered from her suburban parsonage to take her place in Mayfair society. Yet, in spite of her worldliness, she retains something of Candida's warmth and goodness, too.

MISS George acts Miss Cornell's worldly-wise mother with wonderful wit and precision. Her speech has as much style as her appearance. There are few players who can equal her and none who can surpass her when it comes to the quiet authority she can bring to a scene. Mr. Aherne is spruce, sprightly, and effective in the thankless part of the husband. At least he is until the comedy's very end, when he abandons his commendable restraint and indulges in the angry huffings, puffings, and hand-wavings of farce.

Although Gertrude Musgrove's characterization of Miss Cornell's malicious younger sister seems right and contributive to me, the performances of the other secondary players are less than indifferent. Certainly John Emery, who is sporting one of the oddest of all male hair-do's, strikes me as being a regrettable choice for the lover. I wish Guthrie McClintic's direction were firmer in its touch and less frozen in its groupings. Yet, in spite of these reservations, I am grateful for this revival of "The Constant Wife," truly grateful.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

"Wonderful Theatre... a Musical Jamboree!" —Atkinson, Times
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Dances by AGNES de MILLE
with OLGA SAN JUAN
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Production Associate BEA LAWRENCE
Entire production directed by DANIEL MANN
SAM S. SHUBERT Thea. W. 44th St.
Evgs. 8:30. Mats. WED. & SAT. 2:30

"The stage, thank heaven, is alive again!" —WATTS, Post

I am a Camera
a new play by JOHN VAN DRUTEN
adapted from the stories of CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD
with JULIE HARRIS · WILLIAM PRINCE
EMPIRE Theatre, B'way at 40th St., N. Y. 18
Evenings at 8:40 – Matinees WED. and SAT.

GERTRUDE LAWRENCE
In A New Musical Play
The King and I
Music by RICHARD RODGERS
Book and Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd
Based on the Novel "Anna and the King of Siam" by MARGARET LANDON
with YUL BRYNNER
DOROTHY SARNOFF · DORETTA MORROW
Directed by JOHN van DRUTEN
Settings and Lighting by JO MIELZINER
Costumes designed by IRENE SHARAFF
Choreography by JEROME ROBBINS
ST. JAMES THEATRE, W. 44 ST.
Evgs. at 8:25. Mats. Wed. & Sat. at 2:25

R & H
Presented in association with LELAND HAYWARD & JOSHUA LOGAN
PULITZER PRIZE and CRITICS' AWARD
ROGER RICO
MARTHA WRIGHT
IN
South Pacific
Music by RICHARD RODGERS
Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd
Book by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd & JOSHUA LOGAN
Adapted from JAMES A. MICHENER'S Pulitzer Prize Winning "TALES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC"
Directed by JOSHUA LOGAN
Scenery & Lighting by Jo Mielziner
with MYRON McCORMICK
MAJESTIC THEATRE, WEST 44 ST
Evgs. 8:30. Mats. Wed. & Sat. 2:30

"STILL THE BEST MUSICAL SHOW OF THE NEW SEASON!" —Morehouse, World-Tele. and Sun
ARTHUR LESSER presents
BERT LAHR
DOLORES GRAY
in
"Two on the Aisle"
Hilarious Musical Revue with ELLIOTT REID
"A 4-ORCHID SHOW!" — WALTER WINCHELL
MARK HELLINGER THEATRE, B'way at 51 St.
Evgs. 8:30, Mats. Wed. & Sat. 2:30

Leland Hayward presents
Ethel Merman in "Call Me Madam"
with PAUL LUKAS
ALAN HEWITT · RUSSELL NYPE
Music & Lyrics by IRVING BERLIN
Book by HOWARD LINDSAY & RUSSEL CROUSE
Directed by GEORGE ABBOTT
Dances & Musical Numbers by JEROME ROBBINS
IMPERIAL, 241 W. 45th St.
Evgs. at 8:30. Mats. WED. & SAT. at 2:30

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SRL Goes to the Movies

SOME MOVIES ARE BETTER THAN EVER

THE MOVIE industry's favorite slogan—that movies are better than ever—was well on the way to becoming everyone else's favorite joke. Yet strangely enough, totting up this year's score, movies actually do seem to be getting better than ever—some movies, anyway. Critics faced with the necessity of drawing up a ten-best list at the end of this year are going to discover an embarrassment of riches. They are going to have to eliminate an awful lot of really good pictures.

One film that seems destined for serious consideration on everyone's year-end list is Anatole Litvak's thrilling "Decision Before Dawn" (20th Century-Fox). It documents an aspect of modern warfare tactfully ignored by most battlefront historians—the use of spies on either side. And it raises an issue of considerable moment in these troubled times, the nature of treason. By setting this question in the context of German PW's who volunteer to spy against Hitler, George Howe, author of "Call It Treason," made it clear that in his mind certain abstract ideals of democracy can properly be placed above personal loyalties to country and countryman—that one can be guilty of treason for the highest motives. In adapting this exciting and provocative book into "Decision Before Dawn" Peter Viertel has retained—even amplified—all the excitement; but by slighting these motivating forces in its central character, the film presents us with a hero who is a hero largely because he happens to be spying for the right side. Our side. With the result that "Decision Before Dawn" seems even more controversial than the original book.

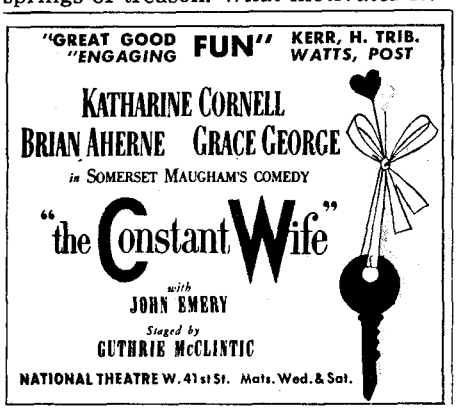
For here is a film that touches, possibly for the first time, the very wellsprings of treason. What motivates it? What condones it? If the answer is nothing more complex than being on the winning team we are justifying sheer opportunism. But if the answer is that a man must fight for whatever he believes right regardless of country are we not justifying treason itself? "Decision Before Dawn," straddling the two, can drive to no clear conclusion. But before it ends it has built a strong sympathy for Happy, its youthful hero—and this despite the fact that Happy is both a spy and a Nazi. Obviously, here is a picture that will bump up against many strong and conflicting emotional currents. Even today the concept of a "good German" is beyond the comprehension of many. And, so far as State Department policy is concerned, what will Germans today think of this portrait of a "good German" who was good because he turned against his Fatherland?

All of these questions arise from the very nature of "Decision Before Dawn." On your answers to these questions will depend much of your own enjoyment of the film itself. They nag at you as the story unfolds; they persist long after you have left the theatre. All of which is actually a tribute to Anatole Litvak and the crew that made the picture. Rare indeed is the film these days that has quite this sticking power. No small part of its persuasiveness comes from the director's skilled and painstaking re-creation of Germany as it looked early in 1945, just as Hitler's Reich was beginning to crumble. Whole cities, not mere sound stages, provide the backgrounds. Both Germany and France were ransacked for authentic wartime materiel. Against this panorama of destruction Litvak sets in motion his small but expert cast.

Richard Basehart, quiet and assured, is Lieut. Rennick, the American who parachutes behind the German lines to contact a German general ready to surrender. With him go Tiger (Hans Christian Blech) and Happy (Oskar Werner), two German war prisoners who have agreed to spy against their country. Tiger is a tough soldier of fortune, a pure opportunist. His interest is in being on the winning side, the side that can afford to pay. Happy is the youthful idealist, and it is his adventures as he works his way alone from Munich to Mannheim that form the core of the film. Five days his trip takes him, and each is filled with new, spine-tingling dangers. Hunted by the SS, never knowing when his name will appear on the dread Black List of enemy agents suspected of being in the country (for Germany also had her spies), he commands our sympathy and admiration. Even when the incidents in which he becomes involved appear synthetic the character itself remains plausible. The film always stands with one foot planted in reality.

The climax comes when the three are reunited in Mannheim. Its age-old buildings, now gutted from repeated Allied bomber raids, invite the grim hide-and-seek between them and the pursuing SS. Moonlight flickering through the broken walls, momentarily revealing positions, becomes a far more potent danger than the little Hitler Youth who has summoned the troopers. Again fabricated plot elements are saved by the sense of reality that underlies the action. Director Litvak, it would seem, worked much harder to maintain the authentic feel of his picture than writer Peter Viertel, whose adaptation of George Howe's novel departs widely from the original to spin out just such melodramatic incidents. Viertel's most serious departure, however, is his failure to provide sufficient background for Happy himself. Much of Happy's character we are forced to draw from the sensitive, intelligent face of the actor who plays the role. To make Happy understandably the "good German" that the picture wants us to believe in we should know far more about his youth, his family, his training, his beliefs. Only then—and this is the important thing—can we estimate the probability of more such good Germans in Germany today.

None of this can detract from the truly magnificent picture-making that has gone into the film. Anatole Litvak has planned his shooting to involve his audiences at all points. His long, sweeping pan shots across the chaos of a new-bombed city, ground troops fleeing a raid by P-47's, the sudden choke of traffic at a Nazi checkpoint—all these mass scenes are handled so that we can pick out from the crowd, but still as part of the crowd, the figure of Happy. At times the camera forces us to become Happy. When the boy lands after his parachute jump the silk falls in on the camera—on us. For us the camera builds the German scene with such detail, such depth, and such dimension that it becomes impossible to accept it all as merely a re-creation. This is Germany 1945 just as long as it remains on the screen. An illusion furthered by a sound track that largely eschews music for the more expressive



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—From "Decision Before Dawn."

". . . an issue of considerable moment in these troubled times."

noises of a clamorous, frightened city, of sudden unprepared bursts of small arms fire, of a railway station under bombardment, or even a quiet bell and the bark of a dog over a cold, empty farmland shot. With a better script Litvak could have made this a great picture. Even so, he has made it a film that compels attention, admiration—and cerebration.

* * *

WHEN THE history of Hollywood comes to be written 1951 may well prove the crucial year. First, there has been a marked change in the caliber of films—at least *some* films. From Broadway this year along with the obvious "Harvey's" and the innocuous "Goodbye, My Fancy's" came plays the stature of "A Streetcar Named Desire," "Death of a Salesman" and "Detective Story." "Born Yesterday" and "The Magnificent Yankee" might also be added to that number; for each was in its own way vitally concerned with people and ideas of a sort that have not come with notable frequency from movie "originals" or the kind of fiction that is generally purchased for filming. They present characters with dimensions, speaking adult thoughts, feeling adult emotions. It is worth remembering that only two years ago, when "Death of a Salesman" first appeared on Broadway, Wolcott Gibbs predicted to his *New Yorker* readers that here was a play Hollywood couldn't possibly touch. The point is two years ago he was completely right.

What seems to be happening is a shift in Hollywood's story values. A "good story" in the past has always meant a plot with lots of action, suspense, a surprise twist for the climax. Now it is coming to mean interesting, life-like characters, honest problems, and honest solutions—even at the occasional cost of the conventional happy ending. Such was the case with Theodore Dreiser's "An American Tragedy," which reached the screen this year as "A Place in the Sun." Rumer Godden's "The River," Stephen Crane's "The Red Badge of Courage," Tom Lea's "The Brave Bulls," Bayard Kendrick's "Bright Victory"—all offered their concern for people as the center for an outstanding film. To this list, drawn from distinguished novels, might be added "Teresa," "He Ran All the Way," "The Big Night," and Billy Wilder's saturnine "Ace in the Hole" ("The Big Carnival"). "Fourteen Hours," "The Well," and Louis de Rochemont's "Whistle at Eaton Falls," developed out of actual newspaper headlines, chose to accent people and relationships rather than sensational disasters.

Naturally, certain basic patterns in the industry persist. Spectacle films, the DeMille-type epics, have rarely lost money; and that old master's "Samson and Delilah" seems to have brought on a veritable rash of historical extravaganzas during the past year—"Fabiola," "David and Bathsheba," "Quo Vadis?" The all-star musicals were also with us, as lavish as ever, as popular as ever. "An American in Paris," "Show Boat," and "The Great Caruso" all set new records for the mammoth Radio City Music Hall. But along with this conventional form of musical there appeared also a film version of Gian-Carlo Menotti's "The Medium" and from England Jacques Offenbach's "Tales of Hoffmann."

A sudden recent cycle of films has drawn on science fiction fantasies—men from Mars, voyages into interstellar space, interplanetary collisions—to give a suitably atomic-age twist to familiar Frankenstein horrors. Pulp fiction of this type has been enjoying a tremendous vogue during the past year or so, and the movie companies seem to have caught it right at the peak. Howard Hawks's "The Thing," with its crisp, realistic dialogue, and "The Day the Earth Stood Still," an exciting man-from-Mars story with important social overtones, were equally expert; but whether good or bad, every film in this particular series has been highly successful at the box office, and there is every indication that this cycle will continue.

As might be expected in this uneasy year just passing, war loomed as large on the screen as it did in our daily lives. A few pictures—"U.S.S. Teakettle" ("You're in the Navy Now"), "Up Front," "Sailor Beware"—found humor either in combat past or preparedness present. But the best—"Go for Broke," "The Desert Fox," and "Decision Before Dawn"—were serious re-evaluations both of why we fight and what we were fighting.

For those fortunate enough to live in cities supporting foreign-film houses the Europeans sent over enough meritorious movies to fill a ten-best list all by themselves. From Italy just as the year ends comes Vittorio de Sica's moving, fantastic "Miracle in Milan." France contributed fantasy of another sort, Jean Cocteau's poetic "Orpheus"; the sober, human "Marie du Port"; and Max Ophul's gay, worldy "La Ronde" (for those communities not protected by censors). Thor Heyerdahl's straightforward account of adventure on a primitive raft in the Pacific, "Kon-Tiki," came from Sweden. From Czechoslovakia the winning "Emperor's Nightingale." Mexico contributed Luis Bunuel's nightmare study of juvenile delinquency, "Los Olvidados" ("The Forgotten Ones"). While England ran the gamut from the puckish humors of Alec Guinness in "The Lavender Hill Mob" to the

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documentary-like fiction of "Seven Days to Noon," from Michael Redgrave's finely etched portraiture in "The Browning Version" to full-blown re-creations of Dickens's old England in "Oliver Twist" and "The Christmas Carol."

But by far the most interesting—and most hopeful — development through the past year has been Hollywood's final recognition of the "art theatre," the small house devoted to the showing of special films. In these theatres, generally operated with a relatively low overhead, pictures that might otherwise be lost in the mammoth de luxe cinema palaces can play for weeks or even months, slowly building their proper audience. It is a pattern that has been followed of necessity through the years by foreign pictures. "Open City," "The Bicycle Thief," and this year "Bitter Rice" each ran in the same tiny off-Broadway house for months on end. And since prestige always accrues to a picture from the *length* of its first New York showing rather than from the size of the house it shows in, such films eventually find readier distribution throughout the rest of the country.

Hollywood is only just beginning to learn that lesson. This year for the first time M-G-M booked several of its important prestige pictures—"Teresa," "Kind Lady," and "The Red Badge of Courage"—into a former newsreel theatre, a house that had until then showed only an occasional British film. United Artists' "The River" has been filling for months yet another small theatre that had been built specifically to house French pictures. RKO bought the American distribution rights for "Kon-Tiki" and booked it into a house that had specialized in first-runs of distinguished British production. And 20th Century-Fox did the same for "Of Men and Music," its compendium of four musical featurettes. This type of release has the added advantage of providing a suitable showcase for those modest productions that must substitute maturity and artistic merit for box-office names. Columbia, Fox, RKO, and United Artists are all now actively encouraging independent production with this special kind of release in view.

There has been much talk during the past year of Hollywood's "lost audience"—the audience lost to films not so much because of television, but simply because the average sort of film no longer interests them. Hollywood, whether consciously or not, seems to be taking just the right steps to win that audience back.

—ARTHUR KNIGHT.

Music to My Ears

THE BING CYCLE BEGINS (AND ENDS)—SZELL AT THE PHILHARMONIC

WHAT PROMISES to become known as the Bing Cycle is taking the place, at the Metropolitan Opera House this year, of the usual "Ring" cycle. As music-lovers are well aware, the Wagner "Ring" is an indivisible entity of four music dramas (prologue and tetrology) which have been included in the usual Metropolitan season more often than not. The Bing cycle is just one work—this year "Götterdämmerung."

Doubtless some will contend that everything of note that occurs in "Rheingold," "Walküre," and "Siegfried" is recapitulated in "Götterdämmerung"—a view for which there is a certain amount of justice. On the other hand, there are those who hold, with Bernard Shaw, that "Rheingold," "Walküre," and "Siegfried" are the *music-dramas* of the "Ring," and "Götterdämmerung" much more an ordinary opera in the Meyerbeer mold. If, to revive the old parlor game, you were cast up on a desert island (complete with opera house) and limited to one of the four Nibelungen scores would it be "Götterdämmerung"? I'm inclined to say no.

What makes this decision doubly debatable is the high quality of the talent which only made its first appearance of the season (it's been eons since so long a period of a Met season went by by without four or five *different* works of Wagner) in the fifth week. The first sounds they made—Helen Traubel as Brünnhilde, Set Svanholm as Siegfried, Paul Schoeffler as Gunther, Deszo Ernster as Hagen, and Margaret Harshaw as Waltraute—reminded us there is a weight and warmth in the Germanic tongue and its music that neither Italian nor French provides. Traubel's vocal range recedes a bit annually—the process, in vocal terms, if glacier-like, is somewhat more perceptible—but in the noble nine-tenths of the scale she conveys a powerful musical experience and no mean dramatic one. Her staunchest ally on this occasion was the beautiful sound and shading of the orchestral sonorities evoked by Fritz Stiedry, whose talents might have embellished an earlier work or two of the repertory.

In my experience of Gunthers I have not seen one who supported his portion of the second act finale with as much power, authority, and vocal strength as Schoeffler. Even when this part has been sung by other Wotans

Margaret Harshaw—"overwhelming effect."

(Schorr and Janssen, for instance), the prevailing mood has been timidity, the vocal color pallid. Schoeffler accepts the Wagnerian dictate that Gunther must be dominated by Hagen, but he remembers, from time to time, that Gunther is half a tribal chieftain too, and stands up to him accordingly. Ernster's Hagen could do with a beard (he could do without it if there was more "beard" in his big but colorless tones), with Svanholm, Harshaw, etc., operating at customary efficiency. Miss Harshaw, incidentally, doubled as the third Norn, with rather overwhelming effect on her less sonorous sisters.

* * *

The type-casting currently prevalent at the Philharmonic has George Szell filling the part of the Mittel-Europa conductor during his period of replacement for Dimitri Mitropoulos. During his first week he slipped over the Rhine to do "La Mer," but his second week found him not far from the Danube basin with a list of Bartók, Mendelssohn, and Mozart. He hasn't played a bad piece yet, and he has played some good ones very well indeed—especially the Bartók "Divertimento for Strings," which went with dash and sensitivity as an embellishment of the 5,000th concert. However, it's a rather odd way to build a symphony series. I know Szell is a sound Weber-Mozart-Dvorak man but how does he do Elgar's "Enigma" Variations? We're not likely to find out at the Philharmonic.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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AMERICANA

(*Continued from page* 10)

perseverance in the face of repeated disappointment.

But to insert further comment on such points of interpretation would be a disservice both to the author and to prospective readers of a book that in the final analysis must be considered a good book. The record from which any study of early Virginia must be drawn is an incomplete and frequently confusing one—probably no two men could read it and read it alike. Mr. Willison's reading of it is both honest and thoughtful, and the results are presented with skill in a text of sustained interest. By the very limits he has placed on his study he has found space for a close review of the troubled experience of early Jamestown, and that review serves to remind us again that the character and the ability of those who rise to command in critical times represent a historical force of no small consequence. It is not necessary to agree with all of the author's conclusions to recognize that most of them merit respectful attention.

Ol' Man River & Its People

CHILDREN OF NOAH: Glimpses of Unknown America. By Ben Lucien Burman. New York: Julian Messner. 235 pp. $3.50.

By JOHN T. WINTERICH

OL' MAN RIVER lives on the patrimony of his forebears—the thousand feeder streams that are often too lavishly generous in giving him drink. Mr. Burman is not here concerned with all of Ol' Man River's progenitors —that would indeed be a large order —but he covers considerable territory, from the Cumberlands to the bayou country, and wherever he goes he is at home. His high concern is not territory anyway, neither land nor water, but the people who inhabit both. For Mr. Burman's characters are largely amphibious.

The reports here assembled appeared serially (*SRL* included) since 1945—they are, to that extent, "postwar." Not that this makes any great difference. Mr. Burman writes of a timeless region which dates history not so much by wars (including the Civil) as by the introduction and, alas, the predictable passing of steam navigation.

—*By Alice Caddy, from "Children of Noah."*
"The Mountain Jurors."

Mr. Burman avoids the tremolo of sentimentality, and his closest approach to a heart-throb is an ostensibly matter-of-fact note at the end of the book—the only note in it: "Since 'Shantyboat Voyage' was written, the towboat *Sprague* has been retired, and given to the city of Vicksburg, Mississippi. *Big Mama* is now anchored at the Vicksburg waterfront, doing duty as a steamboat museum." *Sic transit gloria fluminis.*

These little pieces are not recitals of personal adventure—they are objective writing by one with a shrewd sense of human values and a precise ear for dialect, folklore, and place names: Burnt Camp Creek, Little Double, Gobblers Knob, Manila Village, Caney Corners, Big Stone Gap, Granny Run. And Mr. Burman has an eye for signs, too, and a pencil at hand to set them down, witness the ferry across Bayou Sorel that accepts "No Drunks After 7:00 P.M." His catch-as-catch-can fragments of local utterance contain such delightful malapropisms as a field hand's confusion of Robin Hood and Red Riding Hood, and a mountain judge's memorable observation about a girl whose husband he had just sentenced: "She drove her ducks to a bad market."

Mr. Burman, understand, is no mere assembler of whimsies—they are incidental, but none the less enjoyable on that account. His primary concern is people—people in relation to place rather than place in relation to people. But the reality of place is here, and it is aptly caught (along with the reality of people) in Alice Caddy's drawings.

BEVERAGES

(*Continued from page* 15)

manifest destiny might have proved less dilatory—in which case Professor Carosso could have given us the facts in a chart of production increases. As it is he has a saga on his hands which he presents in its uniqueness, fully documented and (for a change) not so dominated by colorful Col. Agoston Haraszthy, "Father of California Wine," as to slight other leading figures in the history of an industry that now embraces half a million acres, provides a livelihood for more than 25,000 growers, and produces about nine out of every ten bottles of wine that Americans account for.

THE SOUTH AMERICAN GENTLEMAN'S COMPANION. By Charles H. Baker, Jr. Crown. 2 Vols. $5.95. As with his highly successful previous work, "The Gentleman's Companion," Mr. Baker divides his offerings into cookery (Vol. I) and drinks (Vol. II). This time he is handicapped by the disinclination of South Americans to concoct fancy drinks. However, the international colonies in the various countries and the restaurants, hotels, and clubs catering to visitors fill that gap. From their productions he has gathered a wide variety of exotic stirrings and shakings for the amateur host. The culinary recipes are more truly representative of our good neighbors. Same jauntily chummy style as before, same attractive format, but blue buckram instead of red.

THE EARNEST DRINKER. By Oscar Mendelsohn. Macmillan. $3.75. More rewarding than its title would lead one to expect, this world survey of alcoholic beverages and the methods by which they are made is blessed with a forthright style and exceptional clarity in the explanation of technical matters, such as the action of yeast in fermentation and the difference between British proof and American proof. Of especial interest is the section on Australian wines, Mr. Mendelsohn being himself from Down Under. The sixty-two-page glossary of alcoholic beverages and related terms more than atones for its few minor slips (such as "*Fondue:* Swiss alcoholic soup, drunk from communal bowl as prelude to meal") by giving us the delightful "Plonk: an Australian derisive term for certain kinds of wines." This expositor's performance, anything but plonk, merits a place on reference shelves. —L. M.

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POETRY

(*Continued from page 13*)

and the colloquial jargon rarely heightened by the impulse of poetry. The power and sensitivity Mr. Chisholm showed in his last book of poems, "The Prodigal Never Returns," are missing from this satire on contemporary society. It is not that he ignores the tragic implications in a decadent community, but he does not animate the situations. The verses have the effect of struggling for existence, and the language, even when light, is weighted down by the mechanics of the craft.

The verse patter would do quite well in a Broadway revue, but the cantata lacks the liveness and imagination of Kreymborg's verse plays and Lindsay's improvisations, for instance. Mr. Chisholm means to shock, and shock he does by coarseness and vulgarization. He generalizes John and Jane, denominates the nine muses, produces a believable auctioneer, and relates the foibles of particularized vacationists in a melange of ditties. Despite the resolution in hope "Atlantic City Cantata" adds nothing to Mr. Chisholm's reputation as a poet.

—I. L. SALOMON.

IMMEDIATE SUN. By Rosemary Thomas. Twayne Publishers. $2.50. In his brief and prudent introduction to the poems of Rosemary Thomas, Archibald MacLeish searches for influences, and mentions Marianne Moore and Rilke, and graciously admits neither could warp Miss Thomas from her intentions. Not being as perceptive of these literary wraiths which seize the unwitting pen of the poet, this reader did not detect any special influence except a certain verbal association with the modernist in the use of image, rhythm, vocabulary.

Miss Thomas observes in sharp focus, writes with commendable discipline, and eschews the philosophic conundrums. She is a poetic thinker, striving for original, rugged statement. If

Hugh Chisholm—"means to shock."

she sins at times in seizing a metaphor or epithet with too strong a grasp, she sins on the side of sturdy, sinewy rhetoric.

When Rosemary Thomas uses rhyme, it is tight-spun and bronze-echoed, and occasionally tender. Her free verse rhythms at their best have the verve and swing of the early imagists. "London Elegy" is a tense, dramatic sequence of impressions of the city of the blitzes and bombs, and numbness of the heart after terror lost its meaning. She is less successful in the sophistication of free verse, as in "Row Q—Seat 9" (written after the ballet Orpheus):

All Mr. Lopez had left
of a burst heart
was a candy-pink theatre stub
and the Orpheus of his arteries
flooding alone the night.

This is clever satire, but does not measure up to the poetic reach of "Christmas Carol, 1948," a powerful paraphrase of the Scots Border Ballad, and compassionate with observation and understanding:

I saw a drunk on Christmas Eve
(lie down, lie down, Lord Randall, my son)
loud-speakers bleated carols out,
and he, of all the sheep, alone.

There is not too much of social criticism in Miss Thomas's sharp pen, but one of the best pieces in the book is "The Children," which tells of the deep hurt caused by the separation of their parents. The lines are charged with heartbreak. The poem has nothing of the shell of rhetoric around it.

—A. M. SULLIVAN.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Ichabod Crane, in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." 2. "Oliver Twist." 3. Prince John, in "Ivanhoe." 4. De Lawd, in "Green Pastures." 5. Esau, in "Genesis." 6. "Alice in Wonderland." 7. Tiny Tim, in "A Christmas Carol." 8. The March girls, in "Little Women." 9. Bo-Bo, in "A Dissertation on Roast Pig." 10. Goldilocks, in "The Three Bears."

FAITH OF AN HISTORIAN

(*Continued from page 7*)

gerous, however, than any other animal was man himself. The interplay of hunt and war was natural, and perhaps inevitable, when scarcity of game led to expeditions on the ranges of other tribes. The needs of war in turn brought about a rudimentary organization. It was not enough to be the wiliest fighter with the best weapons. The horde had to work together under the guidance of the most experienced leader, and a warrior class developed with a privileged place among those who depended upon it for safety. Society was given its first secular organization within the framework of the war system.

The beginning of politics, in Greece and Rome, was due to the needs of war, when citizens were organized not according to their place in tribal or family cults as in patriarchal society, but according to the weapons they could bring for defense or for expeditions against their neighbors. Within this framework the arts of peace developed, but we should not forget that even the Parthenon was built from a war-chest and by slave labor. No one was then aware of the inherent weakness of such a society. The fall of the Roman Empire was outwardly due to the barbarian invasion, but its collapse really came from the fact that the wars on which Rome grew great sapped the life of the State economically, as well as politically. All antique history is a lesson in the fallacy of militarism.

Now we are at the point where the same judgment can be passed on the nation-state system, which is the modern parallel to the city-state system of antiquity. Although throughout the centuries of its formation the Church as the symbol of peace stood out in contrast to feudal violence and brutal war, it had to admit that wars were sometimes justified, for otherwise it would not have been on the side of law and order against anarchy and violence. St. Augustine faced the dilemma by admitting that it was the Christian's duty to aid in "just wars," meaning those in support of established authority. But when, even in Augustine's day, the unity of the Empire was broken, this distinction between just and unjust wars became meaningless. When in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Grotius and the other founders of international law tried to revitalize this moral distinction of the theologians a new formula replaced it.

In the process of the upbuilding of

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nation-states war had been "the final argument of kings." Now, following Machiavelli, it became a recognized "instrument of politics." The phrase apparently goes no further back than Clausewitz in the early nineteenth century, but it describes the whole process of European state-making for a thousand years. Now that process is being ended by modern science, by a revolution in warfare, which fully parallels that in the processes of peace. In the first days of August 1914 Walter Rathenau, the industrialist, tried, with only partial success, to get the German War Department to see that war had become an industry under the conditions of the Industrial Revolution, and that its impact extended in other directions than those of marching troops. By 1917 this fact was clear to all the belligerents. War, in the scientific era, could no longer be held to the limited purposes for which it had formerly been fought. It had become a catastrophe for victor and victim, a contagion attacking neutrals as well as belligerents. But the weight of the centuries lay behind its use, and the efforts made at Geneva to curb or eliminate it failed as much from half-hearted support as from the frank militarism of the Axis powers. Only the absolute proof of the changed nature of war could prevent it in nations conscious of both grievances unlistened to and power to strike. This proof came in World War II and in the subsequent development of weapons of mass destruction.

It must be admitted that this view of the changed place of war in European history is not shared by many of my historical colleagues, who, having traversed the weary centuries, feel only the weight of the past upon their minds. But these "realists" in history do not come to grips with the fundamentals of the problem: what is the nature of war and the nature of science. It is a strange fact that, although war has been the dominant theme in most historical narratives, it was not until the First World War that any effort commensurate with the task was ever made to analyze the nature of its impact on the life of nations. The pioneering study was the "Economic and Social History of the First World War" of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, on which I mobilized over two hundred experts, including some thirty-five wartime cabinet ministers. Out of the vast assemblage of the data in this survey the one conclusion which finally became clear was that just outlined above: that for nations living under the regime of science, with their worldwide interplay of interests, war is no longer a valid "instrument of policy," not only because of its vastly increased capacity for destruction, but also because it can no longer be held to the purposes for which it is fought. It was this reasoning which induced M. Briand to propose that resort to war of this kind should be "outlawed," and at the same time to warn that such a declaration should be implemented by sanctions "as in the Covenant of the League of Nations or the Treaties of Locarno."

THUS, to summarize much history in a few words, the Charter of the United Nations rests on the lessons of two world wars. It differed from the Covenant in providing stronger measures of defense against an aggressor nation engaged in an unwarranted attack upon a sovereign state. The old kind of war was to be suppressed by a new, more vigorous form of collective security.

Then, just as it seemed as though the long road to peace were almost reaching its goal, it was suddenly enveloped in the shadow cast by the Kremlin, and to most people it has seemed that we must start all over again. The peace of nations is challenged in the name of social and economic justice. The challenger claims to be the champion of the new world of science, armed with its dynamism against the forces of capitalism, held to the past by their very nature as the guardians of vested interests. It is impossible to overestimate the strength of the appeal of this doctrine of revolutionary Communism, with its confidence of ultimate victory based upon an interpretation of history which views the capitalist state as the result of class struggle and the continuing embodiment of war. Peace—Communist peace—can come only when the last war is fought and won, that which is to rid the world of its whole barbaric past—meaning our past as well as that of the uncivilized. Applied in the first place to Europe and still urged there with revolutionary zeal, this theory is now directed chiefly by the masters of propaganda in Moscow to stir the sleeping giants of Asia and Africa against the economic imperialism of the capitalist countries.

In the light of these movements what is left of the hope for world peace? This question is generally thrown out as a challenge by those who think there is no answer to it. But such a negative would be a sur-

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render to the Communist conception of the inability of the capitalist nations to achieve their purposes by peaceful means. Why not meet the Communists on their own terms? There should be no doubt as to what they are: checking Communist aggression in the present and developing social and political justice under the regime of freedom in the future. Where war is threatened or resorted to, as in Korea, it must be met by resort to arms. Regional organizations for safety like the NATO may serve to strengthen the United Nations instead of diverting strength from it, if General Eisenhower's delimitation of military action strictly to defense is adhered to everywhere. To attempt a crusading war to suppress Communism would be criminal folly, for, as this survey shows, its indiscriminate destruction would provide the very conditions for increasing Communism everywhere. The lesson of two world wars is now reinforced by nuclear physics.

FINALLY, we come to the problem of social justice. The Communist emphasis upon it as the one firm basis of enduring peace is certainly justified by history. But history is equally clear that Communism cannot provide it a fitting embodiment. For only in freedom can it discover and protect the fundamental human rights of those who need its protection most. Tyranny, such as the Kremlin practises, uses mankind for its own ends. If these, for a time or to any extent, coincide with the interests of the subject masses, there is no guarantee that this will continue. On the contrary, all history points in the other direction.

The Marxian theory of the Communist revolution looked forward to the "dwindling away" of the state into a world of peace and justice. But Marx, living in the *laissez-faire* England of the mid-nineteenth century, never tried to think through the final problem of just how this classless world would be governed. Lenin and Stalin found their answer in despotism, which, by its very nature, must continue the use of terror until all opposition is so crushed that it cannot rise again. The state, far from "withering away," became more and more tyrannical, and the interests of the ruled must be measured by those of the ruler.

This situation can be partly remedied by enlightened despotism—witness not only Oriental empires but eighteenth-century Europe. Even at best, however, it blocks the pathway to the full attainment of social and political justice. For it runs counter to the fundamental fact that what is right is not necessarily what each claimant individual or government thinks it to be, but the equilibrium of their conflicting "rights" in free interplay with those of others. For justice, as defined in the precepts of Confucius and in Roman law, is merely the "fixed and constant" application of the Golden Rule.

So much on theory. The conclusion is that the way to meet the challenge of Communism is not resort to war, which would only create conditions favorable to it, but the elimination of exploitation the world over.

The instrument to hold the divided world to this dual ideal of peace and justice is at hand in the United Nations. Its inadequacies are apparent, but still more apparent is the need for it. Even its failures clarify its problems. They should be a challenge to courage, not a source of disillusionment. The greatest of all political creations cannot be made in a day or generation. After all, Magna Carta is still violated even where accepted, although it established the bases of law and order more than seven centuries ago.

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BOARD STIFF *Robert James* (Crime Club: $2.50)	Cruise ship to Bahamas sprouts unscheduled murder; passengers in tizzy; survivors tag culprit.	Sea-going cocktail set much of a muchness until inevitable exposure of pasts.	Not too lively
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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 927

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By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Real surname of "Artemus Ward," American humorist (1834-67).	18 31 61 2 23 158
B. Power to produce specific results.	13 97 146 22 50 7 171 107 78 135
C. A round, or other composition with frequent repeats, refrains, etc. (music).	20 67 108 93
D. Applied to a word coined for a particular occasion.	86 73 165 105 142
E. A Sicilian youth, beloved by Galatea, slain by his rival, Polyphemus (Gr. and Rom.) myth).	148 102 1 14
F. Peak, 7300 feet high, Cascade range in NW Washington.	26 84 98 125
G. Chief of the metaphysical poets of England (1573-1631).	32 70 57 48 41
H. Scottish-born American painter and engrayer, best known for genre painting and murals (1838-1909).	109 83 43 42 132 87 15
I. Abnormally watery state of the blood.	40 162 166 157 81 52 169 16
J. Hebrew prophet, herdsman near Bethlehem, 8th century B.C.	11 147 111 24
K. Chief master of Dutch painters of church interiors (1617-92, prefaced by "de").	154 173 113 123 136
L. A small Baltic herring.	17 129 112 51 117 133 138 36 49
M. Former Communist leader in French Indo-China (full name).	10 124 90 37 47 121 85 55 155
N. Former important treaty port of Fukien province, SE China.	27 65 19 95

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
O. Condition of one who is humpbacked.	12 118 66 110 145 144 6 170
P. Operant.	130 29 101 140 74 64 122 153 174
Q. Canadian-born former Columbia Univ. professor who has held many U. S. Gov't positions (1874-).	116 168 96 72 82 156 5 100
R. Ancient name restored for Annam province, French Indo-China (comp.).	150 164 53 69 21 45 60
S. A distinctive impression.	151 58 176 89 137 25
T. Branched.	71 120 8 161 39 99
U. A cadaver.	63 139 79 177 163
V. Angel in "Paradise Lost," next to Gabriel in power.	62 80 141 38 134 131
W. Applied to a catch made while running and with the hands close to the ground (baseball).	94 75 30 106 68 167 152 3 143 46
X. A nonentity; a puppet (2 wds.).	9 28 44 76 35 160 59 119
Y. Capital of country in Word R.	126 54 88 34 159
Z. Partisans of a certain Queen of England.	127 104 115 175 77 33 91
Z'. Readily vaporizable; lively.	128 103 149 172 92 56 4 114

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in, you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

■	■	1 E	■	2 A	3 W	4 Z¹	5 Q	6 O	7 B	8 T	■	9 X	10 M	11 J	12 O	13 B
14 E	■	15 H	16 I	17 L	■	18 A	19 N	20 C	21 R	■	22 B	23 A	■	24 J	25 S	26 F
27 N	28 X	29 P	30 W	31 A	32 G	■	33 Z	34 Y	35 X	36 L	■	37 M	38 V	39 T	40 I	41 G
42 H	■	43 H	■	44 X	45 R	46 W	47 M	48 G	49 L	■	50 B	51 L	52 I	53 R	■	54 Y
55 M	■	56 Z¹	57 G	58 S	59 X	60 R	61 A	62 V	63 U	■	64 P	65 N	66 O	67 C	68 W	69 R
70 G	71 T	■	72 Q	73 D	■	74 P	75 W	76 X	77 Z	78 B	79 U	80 V	81 I	■	82 Q	83 H
84 F	■	85 M	86 D	■	87 H	88 Y	■	89 S	90 M	91 Z	92 Z¹	93 C	94 W	95 N	■	96 Q
97 B	■	98 F	99 T	100 Q	101 P	—	102 E	103 Z¹	104 Z	105 D	106 W	107 B	108 C	■	109 H	110 O
111 J	112 L	113 K	114 Z¹	115 Z	116 Q	■	117 L	118 O	■	119 X	120 T	121 M	122 P	■	123 K	124 M
■	125 F	126 Y	127 Z	128 Z¹	■	129 L	130 P	131 V	132 H	■	133 L	134 V	■	135 B	136 K	■
137 S	138 L	139 U	140 P	141 V	142 D	143 W	144 O	■	145 O	146 B	■	147 J	148 E	149 Z¹	150 R	151 S
152 W	153 P	■	154 K	155 M	156 Q	157 I	158 A	■	159 Y	■	160 X	161 T	162 I	■	163 U	164 R
165 D	166 I	■	167 W	168 Q	169 I	170 O	■	171 B	172 Z¹	173 K	174 P	175 Z	176 S	177 U	■	■

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 5 of this issue.

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SRL / RECORDINGS SECTION

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How Music Happens

PAUL HINDEMITH

Paul Hindemith

THE WORD "idea" is a very vague term for what we really mean when we talk of the composer's creative imagination. The German word *Einfall* is the perfect expression needed in our situation. *Einfall*, from the verb *einfallen*, to drop in, describes beautifully the strange spontaneity that we associate with artistic ideas in general and with musical creation in particular. Something—you know not what—drops into your mind —you know not whence—and there it grows—you know not how—into some form—you know not why. This seems to be the general opinion, and we cannot blame the layman if he is unable to find rational explanations for so strange an occurrence.

Even many composers, although the rather prosaic labor of writing musical symbols on paper absorbs about 99 per cent of their work, look at the apparently unprompted appearance of their own ideas with amazement. They are in a permanent state of artistic narcissism, compared with which the harmless self-admiration of the original Narcissus is but child's play. They will tell you about their creations as they would about natural phenomena or heavenly revelations. You have the impression, not that they themselves did their composing, but that "it" composed within them almost in spite of their own existence.

Let us look with a somewhat more temperate attitude at the ideas, the *Einfälle* that populate our stage set up by musical space and musical time. When we talk about *Einfälle* we usually mean little motifs, consisting of a few tones—tones often not even felt as tones but felt merely as a vague curve of sound. They are common to all people, professionals and laymen alike; but while in the layman's mind they die away unused in their earliest infancy, the creative musician knows how to catch them and subject them to further treatment.

I know a scientist who said: "Everybody can have—and has—scientific ideas, but it takes a scientist to know what to do with them." I am very much inclined to include musical ideas in this statement. Who can be sure that the inner singing and ringing that any Mr. or Mrs. X feels bubbling up in a musically uncultivated mind is not, in its unshaped authenticity, at least as beautiful and satisfactory as —and perhaps even better than—the greatest composer's unshaped inner singing and ringing? It is exciting to know how primitive, commonplace, colorless, and insignificant the first ideas, the primordial *Einfälle*, of even extraordinary musical masters are. But it seems almost more exciting to recognize the specific talent with which those masters keep their ideas fresh and, despite all mutations, basically intact during the sometimes considerably long interval of time required for the treatment of these ideas. In this they are led by tradition, by the presumptive conditions of performance of the future piece, by its purpose and style, and, to a minor degree, by personal whims and fancies that may add certain flavors to the final form. Sometimes a composer may drive his musical material, on its way from the *Einfall* to its completion in a piece, through a tremendous barrier of frustrations which may suppress most of the aforesaid considerations and lead, even with the very first attempts at treating the basic material, to formulations of utter strangeness.

Although it is not possible to watch

Paul Hindemith, composer, theorist, teacher, has set down his reflections on the craft of music in a book, "A Composer's World," to be published by Harvard University Press on February 21. It is from this that the above essay has been extracted.

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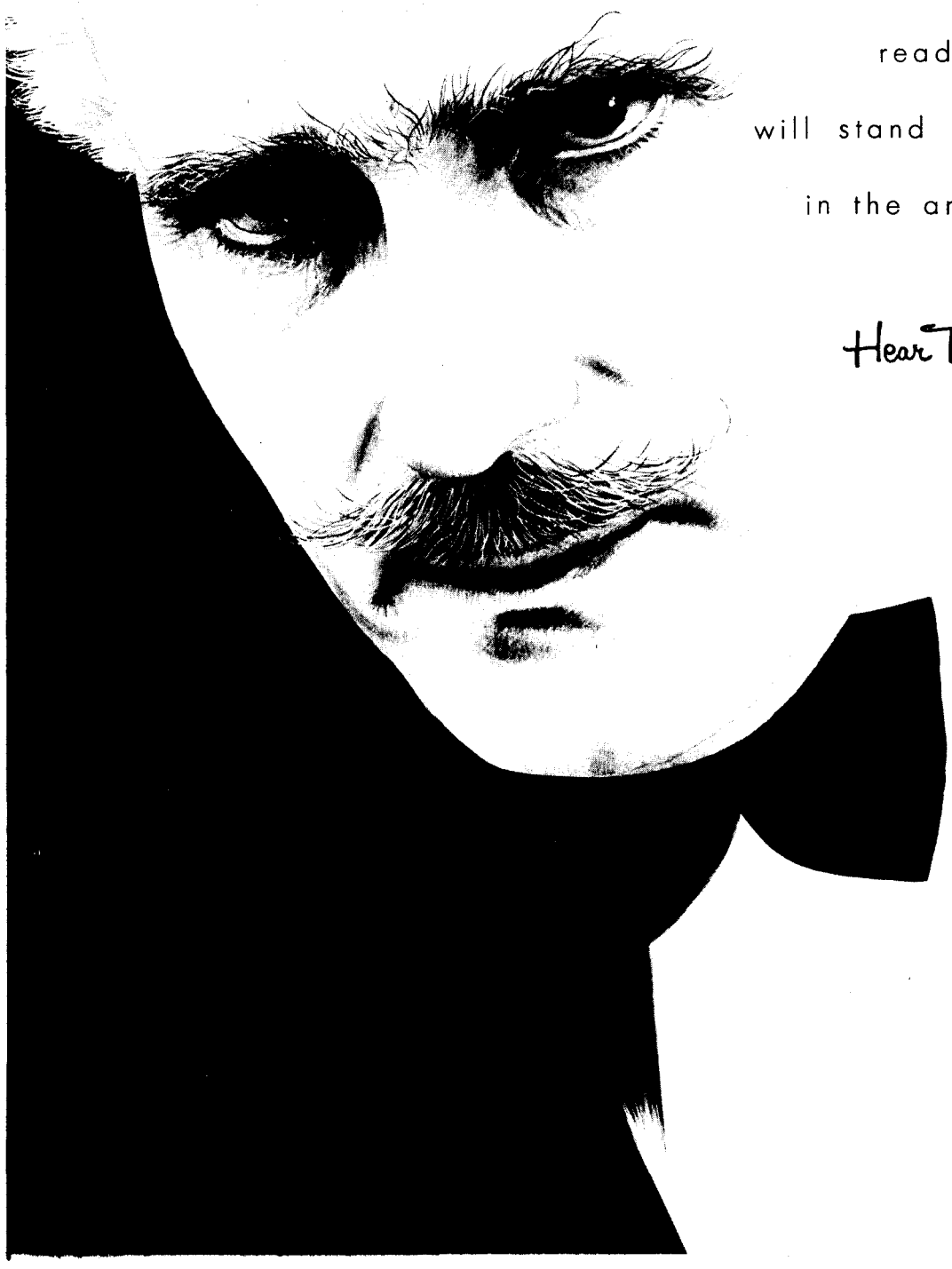

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the source of the singing and ringing in other people's minds—it is not wholly easy even to analyze one's own mind far back into those remote regions of origin and creation—we can in some cases get glimpses of the early fate of musical ideas. To be sure, in order to be observable they must already have crossed the limitations of their first specter-like appearance and have gained some primordial form, either mentally by addition of the results of constructive conclusions, or even visibly in some jotted-down notes on paper. For the most part, only the mental form will exist, until a more extensive treatment brings the rudimentary material into some musically organized, yet still very primitive shape. Jotted-down notes can be regarded as the first steps away from the source, only if a composer's experience of many years has taught him to reduce the normally very long route from his brain to his writing hand. It is in the rare cases when composers of this kind have left us some of these first-step sketches that we can imaginatively trace these embryonic structures back to their still more elemental form, the originai inner singing and ringing. Fortunately for our argument, one great composer left us a good many of these first-step sketches. I am referring to the sketch books of Beethoven.

IN them we find many of the well-known themes which we are accustomed to think of as the most nearly perfect, the most convincing, the most suitable thematic creations: themes so homogeneous, so integrated, that they must have sprung up like the fully armed Minerva out of Jupiter's head. And yet we see them go through a process of transformation and conversion which sometimes gives us five or more intermediate steps from the first structural treatment to the final version. Some of the first versions are in quality so far below the final form, that we would be inclined any time to attribute their invention to Mr. X. And to watch the plodding through those many stages of development is oftentimes rather depressing: if that is the way a genius works, chiseling and molding desperately in order to produce a convincing form, what then is the fate of the smaller fellow? Perhaps it is always true that in working from the tiniest and almost imperceptible spark of structural invention up to an intelligible musical form a petty composer is very much like Beethoven. If only the work involved in reaching this goal really counted, there would be many a genius. The petty composer could do the same, technically, as the real genius did, and he would almost be justified in feeling godlike—as so many authors did and do—because he was able to turn his bubbling inner singing and ringing into music, which Mr. and Mrs. X could never do.

Does all this mean that the genius and the average producer of music are of the same stuff; that in reality there are no such things as musical imagination, ideas, *Einfälle;* and that by mere accident one individual happens to develop into a Beethoven while the other just as accidentally remains an unknown sixth-rate musician? No. It merely means that if we want to understand the power that animates the ideational personages on our scene of musical time and space, we must not ramble through the mental regions that are common to Mr. X, the untalented composer, and the genius. It means that the regions of genuine musical creation are so far beyond our everyday experiences, that Mr. X will never know what they are and the untalented composer will never enter their inner secrets. Mr. X may always have all the wonderful ideas necessary for an excellent work of art; the little fellow may possess the acutest technique, which permits him to develop the most rudimentary ideas into forms of sound. But what the genius has—and what is far beyond their reach—is vision.

What is musical vision?

We all know the impression of a very heavy flash of lightning in the night. Within a second's time we see a broad landscape, not only in its general outlines but with every detail. Although we could never describe each single component of the picture, we feel that not even the smallest leaf of grass escapes our attention. We experience a view, immensely comprehensive and at the same time immensely detailed, that we never could have under normal daylight conditions, and perhaps not during the night either, if our senses and nerves were not strained by the extraordinary suddenness of the event.

COMPOSITIONS must be conceived the same way. If you cannot, in the flash of a single moment, see a composition in its absolute entirety, with every pertinent detail in its proper place, you are not a real composer. The musical creator, like any other creative individual, is permitted to share with the demiurge the possession of vitalizing visions; but it is the privilege of the demiurge to transform them into concrete existence without any interfering technical obstacle, whereas the creative musician, by reason of his earthly heritage, has to overcome many hurdles between them and their realization. If he is a real composer he will not feel disturbed or discouraged by this fact. Not only will he have the gift of seeing—illuminated in his mind's eye as if by a flash of lightning—a complete musical form (though its subsequent realization in a performance may take three hours or more); he will have the energy, persistence, and skill to bring this envisioned form into existence, so that even after months of work not one of its details will be lost or fail to fit into his photomental picture. This does

—*Bettmann Archive.*

Beethoven's manuscript of the "Leonore" Overture No. 2—"the way a genius works."

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not mean that any *f sharp* in the six hundred and twelfth measure of the final piece would have been determined in the very first flash of cognition. If the seer should in this first flash concentrate his attention on any particular detail of the whole, he would never conceive the totality; but if the conception of this totality strikes his mind like lightning, this *f sharp* and all the other thousands of notes and other means of expression will fall into line almost without his knowing it.

In working out his material the composer will always have before his mental eye the entire picture. In writing melodies or harmonic progressions he does not have to select them arbitrarily, he merely has to fulfil what the conceived totality demands. This is the true reason for Beethoven's apparently more than philistine bickering with his material: a desire not to improve or to change any *Einfall* but to accommodate it to the unalterable necessities of an envisioned totality, even if with all his technical skill and experience he has to press it through five or more versions that distort it past recognition.

The half-gifted composer may have visions too; but instead of seeing them in the clarity of lightning, he perceives dark contours which he has not the divination to fill out appropriately. He may have lots of exciting and wonderful single ideas which he patches together in order to get a musical form that corresponds with his shadowy idea, after the formula: the greater the number of beautiful details, the more beautiful the over-all picture must be. For those gifted with flashlike visions, this hunting for beautiful details seems to be useless, since in fulfiling the demands of the vision they have no choice as to the kind and shape of building material; they can only try to obey these demands and find the sole suitable solution. If they should disregard them completely and consider a search for beautiful details justifiable, they would not be creative artists, any more than a philatelist is—or any other assembler of valuables, who with all his efforts succeeds merely in getting together a collection, never in creating an organism.

It is obvious that a composer, during the long period the notation of his work requires, is always in danger of losing the original vision of it. The flashlike picture may fade out, the outlines may dissolve, many details may disappear in darkness. One of the characteristics of the talent of a creative genius seems to be the ability to retain the keenness of the first vision until its embodiment in the finished piece is achieved. There is no doubt that this embodiment, if it is to appear as a true realization of the vision, can come to life only with the assistance of a great amount of technical skill. Skill can never make up for lack of vision, but on the other hand a vision will never receive its true materialization if a composer's technique does not provide every means towards this end. Yet, compositional technique can be acquired even by noncomposers, while clear visions are the privilege of real creative talent.

To acquire a decent technique in composition seems not to be too difficult. After all, there are a restricted number of rules of thumb concerning voice leading, harmonic progressions, tonal arrangements, and so forth, which are basically valid in all kinds of musical settings, regardless of style and purpose. The fact that after four or five years of study many so-called composers are leaving our schools with sufficient practical knowledge in the craft of putting tones together seems to prove this point. But the technique of composition, like the technique of any other art, is a deceptive thing. You may manage the few basic rules of construction with all their combinative possibilities pretty well, and yet the highest degree of subtlety, in which each technical item is in congruence with the respective part of the vision, again may be attained by no one but the genius. There are relatively few masterworks in which this ultimate congruence can be felt. Even in our stockpile of classical music, which by common agreement consists of works written by superior composers, not many pieces fulfil those highest requirements. True, there are many other great and excellent works, which in their artistic value are by no means less important. They may in their ability to speak as human creations to human beings the closest to our hearts, but it is in those few uncontested masterpieces that we feel the breath of universality and eternity, because their particular kind of perfection, the absolute coincidence of intention and realization, is almost superhuman.

The fact that very few masterworks display this congruence of vision and materialization shows us that even the composer who possesses the greatest gift and the highest technical skill is not always able to reach this goal. A tremendous effort is necessary in order to work towards it; not merely a technical effort, but a moral effort, too—the effort to subject all considerations of technique, style, and purpose to this one ideal: congruence.

A Piece of "Conversation Piece"

COWARD: *"Conversation Piece." Noel Coward, Lily Pons, Ethel Griffes, and Ellen Faull, with orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel.* (Columbia SL 163, $10.90.)

IN SPIRIT and conception this is a worthy manifestation of the adventurous Columbia minds which gave us Coward as narrator of Ogden Nash's verses for "The Carnival of Animals," the complete "Porgy," etc. Coward himself is such an asset to the phonograph—and has been for all the years we have been enjoying his HMV "London Pride," "Nina," etc.—that we would wish him only well. But there are serious doubts that "Conversation Piece" is all of a piece.

The elements that clash are several: Coward's simulation of an Englishman speaking English as a Frenchman would; and Pons's efforts to speak English as only the plain Frenchwoman she is and to deliver the lyrics of such a song as "I'll Follow My Secret Heart" without making it sound like "Ill Follow My Sacred Heart"—quite a different thing. As a final blasphemy, I must add that the thin stream of the Pons voice is much thinner when singing Coward's slim songs than when singing "Lucia" or "Lakmé."

In other details "Conversation Piece" is a lively and literate playlet which hardly seems to me worth the lavish length of four LP sides. Aside from Pons's unsubstantial warbling, the production has been shrewdly cast, with fine sweep to the music directed by Lehman Engel, and the patter songs delightfully sung by Coward. For my taste, however, it is all a little dated. —I. K.

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Jewels of the Empress

WILDER HOBSON

THE bonanzas of the LP technique continue to accumulate. It is now possible to have, on four LP records, no less than forty-eight sides of the late Bessie Smith—"The Empress of the Blues" (Columbia GL 503/6, $4.85 apiece). This sumptuous addition to Columbia's "Golden Era" series, which already contains the rich Louis Armstrong anthology discussed here earlier this year [*SRL* Apr. 28], represents many of the best of Bessie's 160 recordings—a great showing of the sturdy woman who was the most famous and one of the greatest singers of her genre.

I wish it might have been possible to include with each set a motion picture film of Bessie and a home projector. For blues singing, unlike many other forms of art, is no hallowed matter calling for extreme selflessness on the part of the performer. If it is any good at all, it is all self—personal, highly spontaneous, heated with irony or comedy or dolor, as the case may be. You don't *have* to see the singer, but the eyes and the stance and the motion count, if they are visible. Traditional blues singing is really part acting and part dance.

I never had the good fortune to see Bessie Smith in her early tent show days, before World War I, when she had just been graduated from the highly informal teaching of Malissa Nix "Ma" Rainey, of the Rabbits Foot Minstrels. I never saw her at any purely colored function of any sort. But surely to have seen her at all was a privilege, and I remember her in two guises. One was the big, dark brown woman who sashayed magnificently onto the vaudeville stage or the dance floor, wearing a white satin ball gown which was startling because of its bright, liquescent contrast with her skin and because of the way in which she filled the costume out—and who then began to lam out a vigorous piece of rhythm in a contralto suited to a large hall. And the other Bessie, at what proved to be her last New York appearance, was a broad, comfortable, dark-dressed creature in furs, who in 1936 stood in a small room above one of the 52nd Street jazz joints and gave an electrified audience an intimate view of the blues without bothering to take her furs off. In both cases she illustrated her song with her robustuous person, a rewarding thing to see.

But her voice and her accompanists are on the records, and they will do. The gamut of the forty-eight numbers is wide, for if, as the excellent notes remark, "to the uninitiated, one blues sounds much like another," the experienced know that Mozart is not all just tinkle. The Bessie anthology contains classic twelve-bar blues that are close to the soil, such as "Cold in Hand," and more ramified forms like "Young Woman's." It contains wonderfully melancholy blues like "Weeping Willow," and mocking blues like "You've Been a Good Ole Wagon," and jubilant blues like "Trombone Cholly," and hilarious blues like "Empty Bed," and blues which express a stoic sadness as the song into which, at the time, Bessie undoubtedly put so much personal emotion, "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out." Some of these, formally speaking, are not blues at all, but Bessie Smith suffuses them with the blues spirit. And the collection includes certain non-blues classics of which she made recordings—"Cake Walkin' Babies," "Alexander's Ragtime Band," After You've Gone," "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight."

Bessie Smith had what any first-class artist has—the warmest and richest feeling for her idiom, the capacity to shape works within it with subtlety and proportion. She had power—and reserve power. She was a prolific and passionate exploiter of the short lyric forms which were her own. Her means, in so far as they are open to analysis, were exceedingly simple. In his painstaking musicological study of Bessie Smith in "Jazz, Hot and Hybrid," Winthrop Sargeant points out that the so-called "blues scale," on which hot jazz is generally based, consists like "our modern major scale . . . of two similar tetrachords." And he adds, in an extended dissection of some of Bessie's blues, that "she uses [the blues scale] with a degree of purity rarely attained in the more florid flights of instrumental jazz. Most of her songs are based on a single tetrachordal grouping, either the upper or the lower, and strayings beyond the four-note limit of this grouping are infrequent." In other words, Bessie Smith is one of the ladies who makes a few notes go a long way. And her handling of her kind of musical economy—the melodic nuances, the harmonic swipes and slants, the variety of the syncopated surge—draws from Sargeant, a rather bilious man where hot jazz is concerned, the free concession that "You've Been a Good Ole Wagon" and "Cold in Hand" are "musical experiences of a high and poetic order."

Bessie Smith—"prolific and passionate."

There is no indication in the ten years of her recording, 1923-33, that her ardent, unimpeachable style ever changed by a jot or tittle. If the circumstances of her life gradually turned toward the morbid, she obviously had enormous resistance. The wonderful last recording date in 1933 in which she made both "I'm Down in the Dumps" and "Gimme a Pigfoot (and a Bottle of Beer)" is highly suggestive. Born in Chattanooga on a date she never knew—it was presumably around 1900—she had as a young woman not only the advantage of the great "Ma" Rainey's tutelage in the blues, but also the benefits of a white manager, Frank Walker, who treated her with an honesty and sympathy and financial foresight not too common in the white management of colored artists. She had worked as a girl for traveling shows like Pete Werley's Florida Cotton Blossoms, and Walker first heard her in a honky-tonk in Selma, Alabama. What he heard was the colored perfection of the kind of singing which Sophie Tucker first made nationally famous. After a while Walker sent the jazz composer Clarence Williams to bring Bessie North, and she was temporarily installed in Harlem for purposes of urbanization. "She was so gosh darn country,"

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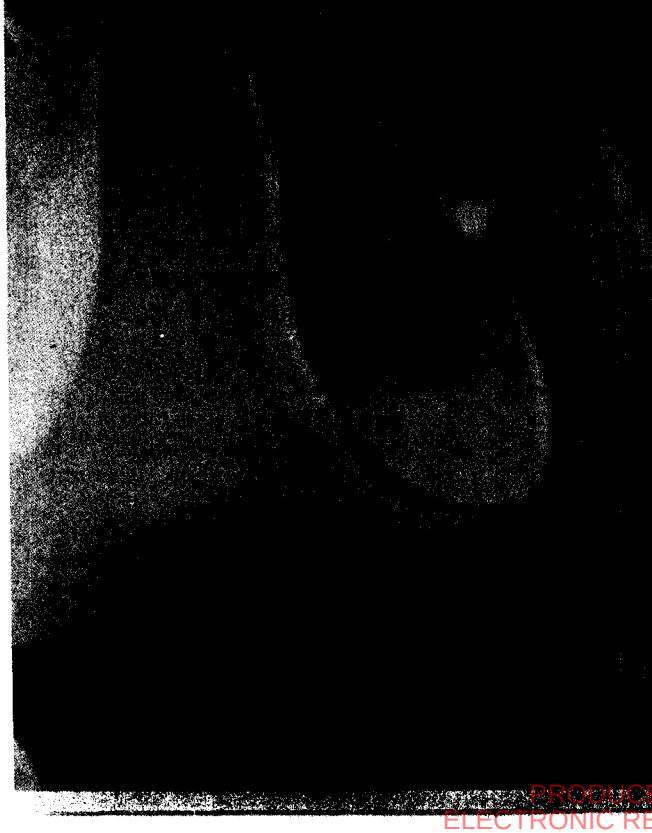

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Opera from B to Z

IN ONE way and another the current list of operas ranges farther, roams wider than in any single month previously. That would be so automatically for the inclusion for the first recorded time ever of Berg's "Wozzeck," speaking only of styles; for the gamut from "Bohème" to "Zigeunerbaron," in the alphabetical; and for the temporal range that embraces Alessandro Scarlatti's "Il Trionfo dell 'Onore," Verdi's "Un Giorno di Regno," Smetana's "Bartered Bride," and Giordano's "Fedora." For such a collation the long-awaited Glyndebourne "Figaro" (on LP) comes as a welcome *entremet*.

But above all, "Wozzeck." Almost any of the half dozen items detailed in the paragraph above might come within the range of the expectable; but it is merely a species of good fortune that perpetuated last winter's concert performance by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos. Assignment of royalties to the orchestra's Pension Fund helped to unkink some knotty questions of rights and contracts; Columbia's willingness to do the physical job with little reward but prestige is a compliment both to its good sense and the eminent position occupied by Berg's work.

Why its position is so eminent is not wholly clarified by the Columbia edition, which offers a synopsis but no text; assuming one can acquire the brochure, published by Universal, containing Berg's adaptation of Buechner's drama (German only for 75¢), a far clearer sense of the imagery and power in this haunted and yet so worldly work emerges. It is, in a sense, a distillation of all the theatre works of the preceding generation (Strauss, Schoenberg, even Debussy) as "Sacre du Printemps" was a distillation of the orchestral ones; in which a mighty impulse to future expression was provided by the capacity of one man to gather together and correlate previous loose ends.

Vocal works of the magnitude of "Wozzeck" being much harder to produce and preserve than orchestral ones of the magnitude of "Sacre," its influence has been slower in asserting itself. But I do not doubt that this recording will vastly stimulate appreciation of Berg's accomplishment, and even pave the way for its production at the Metropolitan. That may not seem the ultimate in approbation, but it is the best this side of the Atlantic can do.

As to the performance and how good it is: Better, by more than a little, than it seemed at the first of the concert performances in Carnegie Hall. For one thing, the motley and distracting garb affected by the singers is no part of this experience, to the aid, actually, of illusion; for another, it has been balanced and adjusted so that the words, tones, and supporting instrumental effects are generally well-proportioned; and it moves without interruption to its appointed end. What about the argument, then, that operas should be recorded in studios for best results? Well, Carnegie Hall was once considered the best recording "studio" in New York, and the presence of the audience intrudes only occasionally, via the international cough, onto the discs. Eileen Farrell is a wholly convincing Marie, Mack Harrell a soberly sensitive Wozzeck, and Joseph Mordino amazingly apt as the Captain, a Soldier, and an Idiot. Smaller parts are very well done by Ralph Herbert, Frederick Jagel, David Lloyd, and Edwina Eustis. Over all broods the potent intellect of Mitropoulos, who saw this vision and made it a reality not only for the nonce, but enduringly. He may well take pride in its realization (Columbia SL 118, $10.90).

Everything else in the current opera list seems "lighter" (in the specific gravity sense) in the light of "Wozzeck," but that does not rule out much accomplishment of worth. Artistically the vocal honors belong to Vienna's admirable Julius Patzak, for a range that encompasses the "Freiheit" air — and preceding recitative — from "Fidelio" and the role of Sandor Barinkay in Strauss's "Zigeunerbaron." The first occurs on one side of a miscellaneous disc on which Patzak also sings two excerpts from "Hoffmanns Erzählung," with Otto Edelmann vocalizing a Wagner-Beethoven-Verdi ("Ehi taverniere" from "Falstaff")-Cornelius ("Salam Aleikum" from "Barbier von Bagdad") miscellany on the other (London LLP 427, $5.95); the second is part of a "complete" "Zigeunerbaron" which duplicates some but not all of the virtues of the Vienna "Fledermaus."

Both issues are "musts" for the art of Patzak, if not for all the associated considerations. The perils incidental to the miscellany are evident enough from a citation of the contents; but the inequalities of the operetta are more complex. They have to do primarily with the involved libretto by

Hilde Gueden—"an individual Musetta."

Schnitzer, which Strauss tried to clarify with his music. To an extent he did; but hardly to the self-sufficient end attained in "Fledermaus." Beside the flavorsome Barinkay of Patzak, the cast is adorned by the clinging tones of Emmy Loose as Arsena, the sound art of Alfred Poell as Graf Homonay, and the spirited Saffi of Hilde Zadek. In the ensembles of Acts I and III, the choral weight developed is quite remarkable.

So far as the score permits, Clemens Krauss's direction is of the same order of distinction as his "Fledermaus," though the ensembles alluded to above do not have the heady zest (or all the top tones) of those on the famous Tauber-Branzell-Lehmann discs, for which the conductor was the redoubtable Frieder Weissmann, Further, though the highpoints of the score are close to the top level of "Fledermaus" (especially, by no coincidence at all, where the meter is ¾) the average is substantially below that of the more familiar score. However, it is certainly an adornment of the literature, and within its capacity London has realized the opportunity with a brilliant cast and wonderfully rich recording (London LLP's 418/9, $11.90).

WHILE with London, consideration of its "Bohème" (London LLP's 462/3, $11.90) shows a notably good Mimi by Renata Tebaldi—especially in its later, more dramatic aspects, in which a real characterization is developed—a suave if not overly rich Rudolfo by Giacinto Prandelli, an uncommonly well-sung and individual Musetta by Hilde Gueden, and variable conducting by Alberto Erede. Had the latter's work throughout been as well-sustained as it was recently at Metro-

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The Spawn of LP

III – Decca

IT is of course a respawning, a rebirth, a renascence; or a fourth blooming, of new fragrance and color. Decca as a company is already middle-aged, but not this Decca, with her authoritative voice and golden dress. The *New York World-Telegram and Sun* has little in it recognizable as the *Sun*, and nothing of the *World;* today's *Life* resembles the *Life* of thirty years ago as Ninon de Lenclos, Mary Lincoln. Decca's continuity, since the early Thirties, is that of name and the discal guardianship of the formidable *Gassenhauer* troubadour, Bing Crosby.

It is by no means improbable that the Crosby association, which has produced stacks of discs and stacks of dollars, prepared an indirect but sturdy line which led from "White Christmas" to the symphonies of Boyce and such. The Crosby profits kept Decca alive during grim phonographic days, enabled it to practise a recording technique and maintain a system of distribution. The company's repertory has been until recently preponderantly popular, with spasmodic unsystematic explorations into less temporary staves, never vigorously initiated nor consistently supported until the advent of FFRR, the spectacular achievement of her overseas cousin, English Decca, with whom she had reciprocal contracts.

This FFRR, a catchy alliteration denoting a result rather than a process, circumscribed a catalogue of discs among the most imposing technically ever to be displayed in the Western hemisphere. Their merited success was sensational and was changing the public conception of how records could sound when the even more spectacular LP dethroned FFRR's short dictatorship.

Decca—our Decca, that is, American Decca—had distributed FFRR's in America; but the arrangement did not continue long and was actually discontinued before the first LP's appeared. The cousins separated, English Decca remaining Decca in Britain but becoming London in the United States; American Decca remaining Decca here but using its Brunswick label overseas.

A fortuitous change in direction brought a re-examination to American Decca. The company had recording techniques and technicians. She had acquired from her association with FFRR a concept of tonal quality and an awareness of the potential market for "classical" records. As backlog, there were European assets, mostly prewar (Parlophone and Deutsche Grammophon), with postwar possibilities.

The Decca leadership watched, analyzed, and prepared. It was obvious to this leadership—as it was to a large part of the phonographic public—that in many cases the new LP production was hurried. In other cases new companies were producing under the same label some records of considerable merit and simultaneously many of remarkably miserable quality. Decca, with what seems like plain, if not common, good sense, intended to make no suicidal mistake. Thirteen months ago the first records of the newest Decca rebirth appeared. They bore a Gold Label, and this is the external physical difference of these from other Deccas. In classical repertory all Decca records are LP, her plain good sense having discovered the obvious disadvantage of interrupted continuity.

The original and early Gold Labels exposed an interesting catholicity of taste or of effort; a movement toward many points of the musical horizon save the commonest points. Menotti, Hindemith, Boyce, Copland, and Stravinsky mingled with Mozart, Handel, and Haydn in unfamiliar guises. Schumann's "Carnaval," in Claudio Arrau's performance, was, in this catalogue, a kind of control. The first of several "Piano Recitals" by Eileen Joyce and a collection of arias by Lina Pagliughi were not evidence of any rigid program nor of a reluctance to avoid directions in which LP is not at its best. The resultant breezy and incongruous miscellany seemed intentionally unsystematic.

It is in the study of Decca's performers that we discern system. Most of the glittering interpretational names are under contract elsewhere. Decca, intelligently, has assembled a small and musically heady list of musicians who by the nature of their art have acquired repute among professionals while remaining shadowy to the large public. The Zimbler Sinfonietta, composed of members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and animated by musical ambitions of a very objective kind; Reginald Kell, probably the world's most persuasive clarinet; Joseph and Lillian Fuchs, violin and viola, brother and sister, incapable of making a musical solecism; Monique

(*Continued on page* 48)

Joseph Fuchs, Monique Haas, Reginald Kell—"the Decca judgment in its choice of musicians."

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Recordings in Review

Toscanini's "La Mer"

DEBUSSY: *"La Mer"*; MENDELSSOHN: *"Midsummer Night's Dream" music. Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony Orchestra.* (RCA Victor LM 1221, $5.72.)

THE RCA vice-president in charge of Toscanini who has had to explain, year after year, the painful expenditures on behalf of Debussy's "La Mer" from which no salable product emerged can finally have a happy holiday. After more than a decade of trying, during which half a dozen different versions were attempted, analyzed, and abandoned, the sun and the moon and the stars were finally in favorable conjunction. Hearing this marvelously full and tempestuous recording, one can realize, finally, what Toscanini was driving at; even such a generally admirable recording as Ansermet's seems a mere black and white when matched against this ultramarine.

Whether, in the end, it remains Toscanini's rather than Debussy's "La Mer" is an open question. One is so taken by the amazing detail, the heavings and subsidings of tone which are veritable waves, the striking brass chords and the violin harmonics at the very end (inaudible on usual recordings) that a quibble is almost indecent. Not many conductors hear this score so acutely, and even fewer —well, let's say none—would have the temerity to insist that every effect be produced. Some, however, have merged the details into a warmer, more luminous picture. Toscanini's attitude seems to be "Here is every brush-stroke, every knife-scrape: now make your own picture." As a sounding accomplishment it is an unquestionable marvel; and Rachel L. Carson's oceanic commentary is highly apropos.

Rafael Kubelik—"discipline, definition."

The second side offers a consecutive version of the wonderful "Midsummer Night's Dream" recording familiar on 78 rpm, beginning with the overture and including the women's chorus, with Edna Phillips, soprano. A grand service to Mendelssohn, and fair enough recording, though hardly in the class of the superlative "La Mer."

Rachmaninoff Revitalized

RACHMANINOFF: *Concerto in D minor (No. 3). Vladimir Horowitz, piano, with orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner.* (RCA Victor LM 1178, $5.72.)

RACHMANINOFF: *"Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini." William Kapell, piano, with Reiner conducting the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra.* (RCA Victor LM 126, $4.67.)

WHETHER as a sample of warm, equitable recording, as the first collaboration of Horowitz and Reiner, or, indeed, the first concerto made directly for LP by Horowitz, this is an issue of exceptional virtue. Best of all, the collaborators have a wholesomely unified conception of the music with which they are dealing, with unfailing justice to both the individual and ensemble values involved.

That conception, it may be noted almost at once, is of a work much more introspective—one is almost tempted to say intimate—than one commonly hears. The prevailing mood, one is convinced, is reverie; the outbursts and heavings are (in the first two movements, certainly) almost those of a sleeper striving to throw off the effects of a drug, but always succumbing again to its power. In Horowitz's hands the contrasts are dazzling indeed—for he has the control to suggest the reverie as well as the rebellion against it.

A minor objection may be entered against the break between sides 1 and 2. The choice is clear in the music, for the second movement has ended and the third is about to begin. However, the transition from one to the other belongs on the second side rather than the first; I would have preferred the first side to end with the D flat major sound of the orchestra, with the piano's transition picking up the quicker tempo for the overside finale. Here is one instance where rigid adherence to the letter of the score is injurious to the spirit of the music. The balance throughout is excellent, though the piano tone has a bit of waver here and there, and some metallic clangor not wholly Horowitz's.

The "Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini" is not only the best playing Kapell has done for the phonograph, but a more integrated, balanced musical expression than I have ever heard from him in the concert hall. That it should be a first-rate treatment of the music in Rachmaninoff's ingenious and affecting work does not necessarily go without saying; but it is. One or two of the variations which are essentially technical go a little faster than even Kapell can manage comfortably. However, there is compensation in the really acute phrasing of some rhythmic details and a loving treatment of the cantabile variation (No. 18) which maintains a singular balance between under- and overstatement. The orchestral score has rarely been given with the spirit and detail evoked by Reiner, and the recording is splendid.

Moussorgsky from Chicago

MOUSSORGSKY-RAVEL: *"Pictures at an Exhibition." Rafael Kubelik conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.* (Mercury MG 50000, $5.95.)

THE increasing tendency of Columbia and RCA Victor to concentrate on their East Coast orchestras has somewhat curtailed the progress report we used to have, via records, on the state of orchestral culture elsewhere. Thanks to London (Cincinnati issues of August) and now Mercury, the service may be expected to continue. Certainly the repertory favored in each instance (Berlioz, Alfven, and Grieg from Ohio; Moussorgsky, Bartók, and Bloch from Illinois) has been soundly chosen.

As exemplified both from this issue and the Bartók-Bloch (see page 40), Kubelik has the Chicago Symphony playing beautifully, with exceptional discipline, definition, and musicality. This last may seem a factor inherent in the conductor rather than the orchestra—in the last analysis it is—but we are all familiar with ensembles that perform with mechanical precision but without conveying any enjoyment by the participants. All the

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solos in the marvelous Ravel transcription—and there are many—suggest the presence of a human being as well as an instrument. On the whole, Kubelik resists the tendency to make a "conductor's piece" of the "Pictures," preserving a good share of the visual in the imagery. As recording, this is quite the best from Chicago in living memory—clean, balanced, without overhang or constriction. In this respect it is superior to the Bartók-Bloch. Let us hope the good beginning leads to many successors.

Chopsticks à la Russe

BORODIN, CUI, ETC.: *"Tati-Tati." Werner Janssen conducting the Columbia Symphony Orchestra.* (Columbia ML 4480, $5.45.)

ONE of the principal requisites of a joke, musical or otherwise, is that it be amusing. Despite all the priming applied by the publicity matter attached to this release—the story goes that Alfred Frankenstein, of *The San Francisco Chronicle,* recommended that Werner Janssen make an orchestral transcription of the original, only to discover (when he finished) that Nicolai Tcherepnin had already done the job—I cannot find it worth more than a chuckle or two. I had been looking, I guess, for something on the order of Dohnányi's "Variations on a Nursery Tune," and this is something distinctly less.

"This," to keep the secret no longer, is an elaborate series of transformations of what the Russians called the "Cutlet" Polka, which Frankenstein asserts is the parent of the "Chopstick" ditty known to all two-fingered pianists. Here, I guess, is our fundamental disagreement; for it is only to so learned an ear as Frankenstein's that the "Chopstick" allusion is as strong as he makes it out to be. Certainly the Russians who wrote the variations—Borodin, Cui, Liadov, and Rimsky-Korsakov—had a much less Oriental idea of "Chopsticks" than we on the East Coast. In fact, since the discovery of the piece stemmed from an article Frankenstein did for the *American Mercury* of 1932, I shouldn't be surprised if he weren't indulging in a little intellectual leg-pulling.

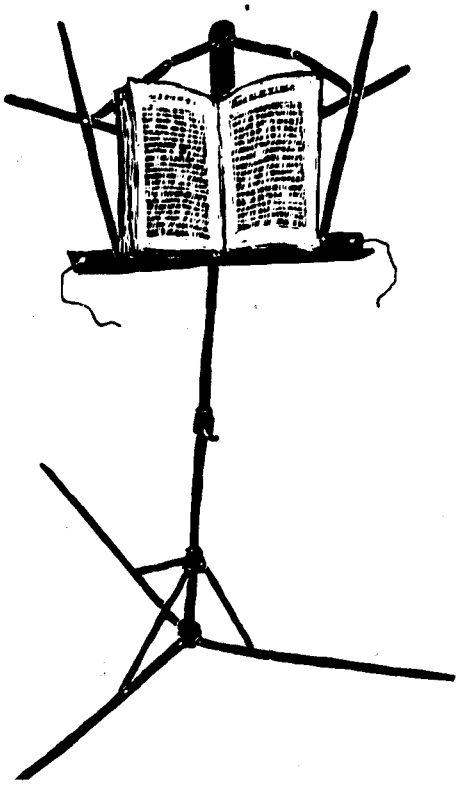
What, exactly, is the meaning of "Tati-Tati"? Until this is clarified, we must hold this to be an incursion on what we know, really, as "Chopsticks"—a theme only occasionally suggested by this mélange. Janssen's series of transcriptions, however, are extremely good, and the recording is a field day for the battery—Janssen pitching, Gilbert catching.

Bernstein Billet-doux

MILHAUD: *"La Création du Monde"*; COPLAND: *"El Sálon México." Both conducted by Leonard Bernstein.* Columbia ML 2203, $4.)

WITH Leonard Bernstein enjoying (we hope) a sabbatical from public music-making, it is well to have so apt a reminder as this of his special kind of rhythmic flair, musical aliveness, and orientation to music of his time. Some of us who think we know "La Création" from the ancient discing by the composer himself will have the pleasure of re-acquaintance and discovery all at once, for if there is some superficial likeness in these patterns to those which used to emerge from our handwound (virtually) apparatti, the multi-colored texture and acute rhythms of the veritable thing are stimulating all over again. Also, the suggestions of Villa-Lobos when that gentleman was not yet a name.

Almost as much is true of "El Sálon México," which comes from the overside as quite a different thing from the famous performance of Koussevitzky. Some of the transformation is due to the recording itself—much closer to the sound than the Symphony Hall sort—but even more to the treatment, which dispenses with generalities of the kind that impressed from Koussevitzky, and gets down to the sounding detail of the score. Whether this is just what the composer wanted I can't say, but it makes for a remarkable "candid," so to speak, where the Koussevitzky was more a retouched gravure job. Each side is a model of balance and instrumental fidelity, though the muted brass is almost overcompressed on the Copland.



Four by Beecham

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *"Coq d'Or" Suite;* FRANCK: *"Le Chasseur Maudit." Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.* (Columbia ML 4454, $5.45.)

HAYDN: *Symphonies No. 94 ("Surprise") and 103 ("Drum Roll"). The same.* (Columbia ML 4453, $5.45.)

CONTEMPLATING the miscellany above—a trickle, may we say, of the outpouring we had anticipated from Sir Thomas—one would expect the "Coq d'Or" to be dazzling, the "Chasseur" somewhat tepid, the quality of the Haydn symphonies inverse to their popularity. But with Sir Thomas it is never wise to generalize; it is the "Chasseur" which is dazzling, the "Surprise," of the two Haydn symphonies, which charms more irresistibly.

At that, it is unquestionably the Haydn symphonies which add to the most music, not only for intrinsic eloquence, but also for the warming fire of life and enthusiasm that Sir Thomas applies to them. It is no small feat to take a thrice-familiar score, such as the "Surprise," and animate it anew; it is even a greater feat to accomplish this animation in the slow movement itself. All the values are keenly estimated, with a special tenderness and freedom for the variation in which oboe and strings are prominent. Equally hearty and undistorted is the slow movement of the "Drum Roll," in which the virtuosity of the orchestra is especially prominent.

Beecham's "Coq d'Or" will delight many ears for the gaiety and color of the material, but the playing seems to be several shades paler than the material itself, also a duller kind of recording than is heard in the Haydn. On the other hand, the Franck tone poem (whose previous phonographic interpreters have all been insufficient) is given a vitality of statement quite beyond anything the work would seem to contain. As in such other works of his recorded repertory as Chabrier's "España," the "Peer Gynt" Suites of Grieg, and certain Slavonic creations of Dvorak, the score alone is something less than the score plus Beecham.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Recordings Reports: Classical LP's and Albums

See page 47 for Pop Roundup

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Albeniz: "Cordoba," etc. George Copeland, piano. M-G-M E87, $3.	A welcome return for Copeland, long a specialist in this and the other selections by Granados ("La Playera"), Nin, Infante, and Mompou that he plays. Save for a "Danza de la hoguera," by Tito Luga, the repertory is mostly familiar, but Copeland's directness and poetry do not pale. Better than average piano sound, too.
Bartók: "Music for Stringed Instruments, Percussion, and Celesta." Rafael Kubelik conducting Chicago Symphony. Mercury MG 50001, $5.95.	An auspicious debut for Kubelik on domestic discs, with the absorbing Bartók work rendered somewhat more justice than in its previous Capitol issue. Clarity and detail are favored by the engineers at the expense of desirable roundness. Bloch's "Concerto Grosso" is expertly done on the second side.
Beethoven: "Grosse Fuge." Franz Litschauer and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra. Vanguard VRS 419, $5.95.	Robust treatment of the celebrated Opus 133, comparable to, if not quite the equal of, the classic version of the Busch Chamber Music Players. Litschauer's musicians are plainly expert in this music and deliver it with compelling fervor. Purcell's "London" Chaconne and Three-Part Fantasias complete the two sides. Fine sound.
Chopin: Sonata in B minor. Rudolf Firkusny, piano. Columbia ML 2201, $4.	Lyricism of a lofty order by Firkusny in much of this work, though he tends to make a needless show of facility in the scherzo. A player who can finger the slow movement so well need not fear his facility will be underrated. Clean, clinging piano tone.
Delibes: "Sylvia," etc. Hugo Rignold conducting the Covent Garden Orchestra. Decca DL 9548, $5.85.	Anyone dissatisfied with the Désormière treatment (though why, I cannot imagine) will find this an uncommonly vital and painstaking re-creation of Delibes's lively fantasy. Rich, broad sound here and in the overside "Invitation to the Dance" and "Dance of the Hours."
Mozart: B flat ("Hunt") Quartet. Loewenguth Quartet. Decca DL 7517, $3.85.	Deftly insinuating work by the Loewenguth ensemble, in territory already populated by the Amadeus, Kroll, and Roth groups. At that it is certainly second only to the Amadeus, and may attract some favor for being self-contained on a ten inch disc, while the others are twelves, with second side complications.
Mozart: Concertos No. 24 and No. 27. Badura-Skoda, piano, with the Vienna Symphony conducted by Felix Prohaska. Westminster WL 5097, $5.85.	Per note, this is as cheap as great music superbly performed has ever been available: two mature Mozart concertos played with unfailing taste and finesse by Badura-Skoda, handsomely supported by Prohaska's excellent orchestra. Soundwise, it is comparable to the same firm's "Military" Symphony for justness of detail and exemplary treatment of a difficult instrument—here the piano.
Offenbach: "Belle Hélène" and four other overtures. Jean Martinon and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. London LLP 350, $5.95.	Somebody's jolly good idea done in fine style by Martinon and enough musicians to play Strauss's "Domestica." Five Offenbach tuneful delights, of which "Orphée aux Enfers" is the only hackneyed one. Even it is tolerable in the company of "Le Mariage aux Lanternes," "Barbe-Bleu," and "La Grand-Duchesse de Gérolstein." Martin Cooper's notes supply a relevant touch of urbane scholarship. Outstanding recording.
Puccini: "Ore liete divine" ("La Rondine"), etc. Dorothy Kirsten, soprano, with orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. Columbia ML 2220, $4.	Affecting vocalization by Kirsten in her chosen repertory, which gratefully features items from "Rondine," "Turandot" ("Tu che di gel sei cinta"), and "Manon Lescaut" ("Sola, abbandonata"), as well as the more common "Vissi d'arte," "Un bel di," etc. A hint of passion breaks through the artist's usual composure now and then, to decidedly welcome results. Good work by Cleva and orchestra, also the engineers.
Schubert: "Gute Nacht" and ten other songs. Heinrich Schlusnus, baritone, with Sebastian Peschko, piano. London LLP 106, $5.95.	Much of the inimitable mellowness of the Schlusnus voice of old is lacking in this new series, but the charming manner, the impeccable enunciation, the sheer "feel" for lieder singing are as vivid as ever. "Ständchen," "Musensohn," "Lindenbaum," "Wohin," "Die Post," and "Die Stadt" are some of the others included. Fine balance with Peschko's ever sensitive piano. (The side beginning with "Ständchen" is the better.)
Schumann: Quartet in F (Opus 41, No. 2). The New Italian Quartet. London LLP 323, $5.95.	Suave, well-phrased, uncommonly plastic molding of a work not nearly as well-known as it should be. The quartet is undoubtedly one of the best now performing, if hardly so outstanding as some reports of its New York debut suggested. With the Schumann is a fleet, beautifully disciplined playing of the Verdi Quartet. Both are examples of chamber music reproduction at its best.
Sibelius: "Finlandia" and "Swan of Tuonela." Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Columbia AL 9, $2.85.	One in a numerous new list of Columbia issues in which two "overture-length" works are joined on a ten-inch LP without "filler" matter. This congruous pairing is superior to most of the others, in rightness of combination and quality of execution. In 78-rpm terms the price is high.
Sibelius: Symphony No. 2. Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony. RCA Victor LM 1125, $5.72.	Not only a seemly memorial to the late Koussevitzky but a splendid version of the work itself, one of the best to the recent credit of the Boston under its long-time director. Rich-toned recording, admirably microphoned.
Strauss, J.: "Künstlerleben," etc. Clemens Krauss conducting the Vienna Philharmonic. London LP 454, $5.95.	Lightly volatile, warmly rhythmic treatment of the favorite waltz by Krauss and his 3/4 virtuosos. The "etc." embraces "Frühlingstimmen" and the overtures to "Fledermaus" and "Zigeunerbaron." It is one of a series that threatens to do for Johann what the Haydn Society is doing for Josef.
Tchaikovsky: Suites 1 and 2. Walter Goehr conducting the Winterthur Symphony. Concert Hall LP's 1121, 1122, $5.95 each.	A little-known aspect of the Tchaikovsky literature (the earlier of the suites came after the first four symphonies) and one well worth cultivation. Did one not know what their titles were, they might easily be accepted as additions to the ballet catalogue (as they will now doubtless become). Authoritative treatment by Goehr, and about the best Concert Hall recording to date. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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OPERA FROM B TO Z

(*Continued from page 36*)

politan performances, one would have a more active enthusiasm for the discs, but the indulgent tempos (for the benefit of the singers, it sounds) at the end of Act I and again in Act IV slows the course of the music unpleasantly. As recording, the sound is mellower than the Columbia issue, though Sayao-Tucker-Baccaloni and company are scarcely shamed by vocal comparison. Aside from recording—in which London is outstanding—values are about even.

In another month the complete "Verkaufte Braut" (the German title is inescapable because that is the language of the performance) would merit lengthier consideration of its substantial virtues and incidental shortcomings. Space for that not being available, we may cite, in the first category, the excellent singing and dramatic characterization of a strong cast of which Kurt Böhme is outstanding as Kezal, Traute Richter is a satisfactory Marie, and Sebastian Hauser has the temperament for Hans if not always the voice. I do not find Hans Lenzer as light a hand on the baton as this score requires, but he directs the vocal traffic expertly and to the end of generally well-balanced, orderly performance. Excellent enunciation of the text is ever present, also expert orchestra playing. Generally the sound is impressive, though the big ensembles are a bit cramped (Urania URLP 210, $18.50).

WE WOULD, perhaps, be a shade more enthusiastic for both Böhme and Hauser had not a pertinent reminder of truly distinguished singing of their roles come from an Eterna disc devoted to the art of Michael Bohnen and Joseph Schmidt (ELP 460, $4.75). Together they are heard in the Act II duet, with Bohnen's rolling patter and Schmidt's lyric interjections drawing an irresistible picture. This is tolerably reproduced, as is Schmidt's singing of "Addio alla madre" from "Cavalleria," but there is less to be said for the "Faust" excerpts by Bohnen or his "Hier im ird'schen Jammerthal" from "Freischütz," save that the latter remains the rare piece of virtuosity it has been for twenty-odd years.

Of the Scarlatti-Verdi-Giordano matter also offered for the opera-lover's consideration this month, we are most taken by Alessandro Scarlatti's "Il Trionfo dell'Onore" ("Honor's Triumph"). This is a delightful period piece—period 1718—admirably sung by Amedeo Berdini, Amalia Pini, Afro Poli, Rosanna Zerbini, and others, with an excellent orchestra (mostly strings) conducted with fine taste and comic perception by Carlo Maria Giulini. Its stylized ensembles and solos are endlessly listenable, for pure sustained musicality as well as a kind of delicate vocal coloring of which one hears little today (Cetra-Soria LP set 1223, $11.90).

We confess, finally, a sheer inability to absorb more stylistic diversity than this in a single month, and hence defer until next time a consideration of the Verdi and Giordano items noted above, also lengthy discussion of a "Huguenots" potpourri, in which Slezak, Hempel, Jose Mardones, Hermann Jadlowker, Selma Kurz, and Richard Mayr are heard howling, sobbing, lyricizing, and jubilating in unlikely proximity (Eterna ELP 458, $5.95). Aside from one splotch of electrical recording that stands out like a clear day in London, it is all dim-sounding or worse, but some of the vocal effects (Slezak's high D, Hempel's glittering *staccati*) are worth straining to hear.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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17 NEW RELEASES

"PIANO CONCERTO No. 4 IN G MAJOR"
(Beethoven) (Opus 58)
Wilhelm Backhaus (piano) with The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Conductor: Clemens Krauss
LLP-417 — $5.95

"VIENNA PHILHARMONIC 'NEW YEAR'S' CONCERT"
Clemens Krauss conducting
The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
LLP-484 — $5.95

"MUSIC OF JOHANN STRAUSS" No. 2
The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Conductor: Clemens Krauss
LLP-454 — $5.95

"A SCHUBERT RECITAL BY HEINRICH SCHLUSNUS"
Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone)
Sebastian Peschko (piano)
LLP-106 — $5.95

"SYMPHONY No. 6, IN F MAJOR"
(Pastoral) (Beethoven)
The London Philharmonic Orchestra
Conductor: Erich Kleiber
LLP-33 — $5.95

"QUARTET No. 2 IN F MAJOR"
(Opus 41, No. 2)
(Schumann)
"QUARTET IN E MINOR"
(Giuseppe Verdi)
The New Italian Quartet
(Quartetto Italiano)
LLP-323 — $5.95

"QUARTET No. 9 IN C MAJOR"
(Beethoven) (Opus 59, No. 3)
The New Italian Quartet
(Quartetto Italiano)
LLP-321 — $5.95

LA BOHEME
Complete Recording
(Giacomo Puccini)

Mimi ..... Renata Tebaldi (soprano)
Rodolpho ..... Giacinto Prandelli (tenor)
Musetta ..... Hilde Gueden (soprano)
Marcello ..... Giovanni Inghelleri (baritone)
Colline ..... Raphael Arie (bass)
Schaunard ..... Fernando Correna (bass)
Benoit ..... Melchiorre Luise (buffo)
Alcindoro
Parpignol ..... Piero de Palma (tenor)
Sergente dei Doganiere
Un Doganiere ... Ildebrando Santafe (bass)
CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA OF SANTA CECILIA ACADEMY, ROME
Conductor: ALBERTO EREDE
LLP-462/3 — $11.90

DER ZIGEUNERBARON
The Gypsy Baron — Complete Recording
(Johann Strauss)

Graf Peter Homonay ..Alfred Poell (baritone)
Conte Carnero ..... Karl Dönch (bass)
Sandor Barinkay ..... Julius Patzak (tenor)
Kalman Zsupan ..... Kurt Preger (tenor)
Arsena ..... Emmy Loose (soprano)
Mirabella ..... Steffi Leverenz (contralto)
Ottokar ..... August Jaresch (tenor)
Czipra ..... Rosette Anday (contralto)
Saffi ..... Hilde Zadek (soprano)
Pali ..... Franz Bierbach (bass)
THE VIENNA STATE OPERA CHORUS and THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Conductor: CLEMENS KRAUSS
LLP-418/9 — $11.90

LONDON RECORDS

"ARIAS FROM DIE ENTFUHRUNG AUS DEM SERAIL"
(Mozart)
Ludwig, Lipp, Loose, Koreh with The Vienna State Opera Chorus and The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Conductor: Josef Krips
LLP-458 — $5.95

"GRAND SEPTETT IN E FLAT"
(Konradin Kreutzer) (Opus 62)
Members of The Vienna Octet
LLP-420 — $5.95

"FAMOUS OVERTURES"
Offenbach
The London Philharmonic Orchestra
Conductor: Jean Martinon
LLP-350 — $5.95

"MOZART AND VERDI ARIAS"
Hilde Gueden (soprano)
with The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Conductor: Clemens Krauss
LPS-485 — $4.95

"VIENNA STATE OPERA CONCERT"
Julius Patzak (tenor) and Otto Edelmann (bass)
with The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Conductor: Rudolf Moralt
with The Chorus of The Vienna State Opera
LLP-427 — $5.95

"VIENNA STATE OPERETTA CONCERT"
Karl Friedrich (tenor) and Hilde Gueden (soprano)
with The Vienna State Opera Orchestra
Conductor: Wilhelm Loibner
LPS-428 — $4.95

"STRING QUARTET IN F MINOR"
(Beethoven) (Opus 95)
The Griller String Quartet
LPS-107 — $4.95

"SUITE No. 4 IN E FLAT MAJOR FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO"
(J. S. Bach)
Enrico Mainardi
LLP-404 — $5.95

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THE OTHER SIDE

(IMPORTED RECORDINGS)

VIENNA.

THE frenzied recording in Vienna continues to dominate the scene here for anybody who is not interested in hearing the endless succession of Beethoven, Brahms, and Bruckner symphonies which the Viennese concert hall has offered to its public for years. Various enterprising people, such as the director of the Konzerthaus, Dr. Egon Seefehlner, have tried to combat the Viennese taste by putting on festivals of modern music and cycles of Haydn mixed with modern music, all of which leaves the Viennese public cold. They want to hear their nine Beethoven, four Brahms, and at least four Bruckner symphonies every year.

It is typical that the only cycle given in the Konzerthaus which was sold out almost immediately was the Brahms chamber-music series. On the other hand, Franz Litschauer's fine chamber orchestra, which specializes in old and new music, skipping the romantics and Beethoven, plays to consistently empty halls. They have been forced to undertake long tours of Scandinavia, Italy, and France, where a more appreciative public turns out for programs of early Haydn symphonies, Bartók, Pergolesi, Hindemith, and Vivaldi. The Vienna State Opera, once a paragon of smoothly oiled ensembles (what Mozart we used to hear in 1947!), has now reached a state of apathy which is truly pathetic. All of their magnificent singers — Seefried, Schwarzkopf, Gueden, Jurinac, Dermota, Schoeffler, Hotter, London — spend most of the season in New York, Milan, London, or Paris, and the conductors of the present State Opera here are unable to make any sort of lasting ensemble. In a recent "Don Giovanni," in which George London created a minor sensation as the Don, there were three different Ottavios on three successive nights. London then had to leave for foreign parts.

Behind the scenes, as it were, the recording companies are feverishly putting on tape quantities of music which no Viennese alive has ever heard of. Dean Dixon and Walter Hendl were recently here, recording American music (Diamond, Copland, Thompson, Sowerby, etc.) for the Ditson Fund. Both made an excellent impression on the Vienna Symphony, whose opinion of American conductors up to now has been understandably low.

Westminster has been making new tapes day and night. If they continue at their present rate they will have a catalogue the size of all the other independents put together. Hermann Scherchen has made several Bach cantatas and will make all the Beethoven symphonies in the course of the next few months. Westminster has just completed "Tosca," in addition to its other activities (Schubert chamber music, Haydn symphonies with Scherchen, etc.). The technical standard of this firm is far and away the best in Vienna.

Vox has recorded a series of Mozart piano concertos with Lili Kraus and the conductor Rudolf Moralt. It is a curious fact that Mozart concertos are all but unknown in Vienna's present musical life, with the exception of the D minor, C minor, and A major. Only one pianist here, the talented Ilse von Alpenheim, campaigns for these Mozart concertos. To date she has had to go to Switzerland in order to play many of them.

The first German long-playing records, produced by Deutsche Grammophon, have created a sensation in Germany. Inevitably, the first releases featured Bruckner ("Te Deum," conducted by E. Jochum), Beethoven, and Johann Strauss. So far, only ten-inch discs have been released. The Bruckner work, which is the only one I have managed to find here in Vienna, is very well recorded, if not up to Columbia's best standard.

A new set of Bach's "Brandenburg" Concertos are currently being recorded by the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Austria's leading expert in organ building and an authority on old music in general, Prof. Josef Mertin. The distinguishing characteristic of this new series, which is to be released by Supraphon and Telefunken, is that it really uses Bach's original instruments: a violino piccolo is played by Edith Steinbauer (the concertmaster of the orchestra), and all of the violins use curved bows. The double and triple stops sound gorgeous! Helmut Wobitsch plays the trumpet part of the Second Concerto and Franz Koch the horn in No. 1. Two harpsichords were used for No. 5, one for the solo and one for the continuo part. The only trouble with the series is that the performances as a whole are not as lively as those of Wöldike or Münchinger (Stuttgart). But No. 2 is certainly the best I ever heard. Wobitsch actually plays *all* of the notes.

The daily routine of recordings was broken a few weeks ago by the sensational announcement in the local press that several thousand meters of Haydn's "Harmoniemesse" had been stolen from the "Symphonia" Studio of the Konzerthaus. The conductor, that enterprising and ever-busy Jonathan Sternberg, has since remade the "stolen" part. He played me about half of the piece on tape; it is certainly his best recording to date.

—H. C. ROBBINS LANDON.

* * *

LONDON.

SINCE Benjamin Britten burst upon the operatic scene with "Peter Grimes" six years ago each new work he has written for the stage has been awaited with uncommon interest, though many of his admirers may well have been becoming a trifle impatient with the rarefied brand of chamber-opera to which he turned his attention after "Grimes." Now he has at last returned to the larger canvas with "Billy Budd," a four-act opera with prologue and epilogue, the libretto by E. M. Forster and Eric Crozier based on Herman Melville's story of the same name. The world premiere took place at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, under the composer's direction, on December 1. Josef Krips had been scheduled to conduct but relinquished the task some weeks before, ostensibly because the photostat score was proving too much of an eye-strain (having myself conducted from a Britten manuscript score under great difficulty I can sympathize, without regarding it as a valid explanation). "Billy Budd" enjoyed a tremendous reception from a distinguished first-night audience and the first press reactions were almost unanimous in declaring it to be his best work so far, with *The Times* stating that it had "added a crowning distinction to this annus mirabilis of English music." I regret to say that as I came away from this performance my mind was beset by grave doubts as to whether what we had seen and heard did in fact represent any advance on "Peter Grimes." Whatever the answer may be, I have now far less confidence in Benjamin Britten's ability one day to give us a really great opera than I had in 1945 and preserved through "The Rape of Lucretia," "Albert Herring," and the delightful "Let's Make an Opera."

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Yet one ought to have known better, for looking back upon the earlier works from the all-male environment of "Billy Budd" it becomes obvious that this latest choice of a libretto was the logical outcome of Britten's inability to create living female characters except those of the comic or near-comic variety (Auntie and Mrs. Sedgley in "Grimes"; Lady Billows and Miss Wordsworth in "Herring"). He seems to have given up the attempt to draw women for the present, and in "Billy Budd" we have a world that is not just devoid of women by force of occupational circumstances (the action takes place on board a British man-o'-war towards the end of the eighteenth century), but one that is clearly self-sufficient in its celibacy.

It is a brilliant and fascinating score, most probably Britten's finest achievement so far taken purely as music, yet not once did it succeed in touching the heart because it failed completely to make me identify myself with any of the characters or situations. It begins to look as if "the great white hope of British opera" will feed us on a diet of whimsical comedy or adolescent parable for the rest of his days, and I for one do not particularly relish the prospect.

ON the gramophone front we are in for an operatic winter without parallel, the two chief protagonists straining every sinew to produce bigger and better recordings of complete operas. This month Columbia has issued the Bayreuth 1951 "Meistersinger" (all sixty-eight SP sides of it) while Decca immediately countered this by announcing that Acts I and III of its Vienna recording will be available in January, together with the same company's Bayreuth "Parsifal." HMV has lost no time (after all, Verdi year, 1951, is almost over) in releasing the Toscanini "Traviata" on SP, but neither this set nor Columbia's "Meistersinger" looks like achieving reasonable sales until they reach us in LP form. Decca's charming "La Bohème", on the other hand, is a huge success and we may expect the forthcoming "Madame Butterfly" to rival its popularity.

Among the many operatic excerpts we find King Marke's famous solo from Act II of "Tristan," which is sung with rough tone but great dignity by Ludwig Weber. This Columbia set also contains the short passage from Act III just preceding the "Liebestod." Here Weber is joined by Schwarzkopf, who invests Brangaene's lines with infinite tenderness. For those who want to know "The Truth About Tristan" HMV has issued a new recording of Bernard Miles's celebrated monologue, whose significance in relation to the newly opened Mermaid Theatre I wrote about two months ago. According to the latest information, HMV is recording the Mermaid performance of "Dido and Aeneas" with Flagstad as Dido and Schwarzkopf (not Maggie Teyte) as Belinda. Back on Columbia Jennie Tourel is heard in the "Habanera" and the "Chanson Bohème," surprisingly dull performances that are singularly devoid of "it." Paolo Silveri applies his resonant baritone and unsubtle delivery to "Ah, per sempre" from "I Puritani" and "Oh de verd' anni miei" from "Ernani," while poor Richard Tucker has received some rough treatment at the hands of a reviewer in *The Gramophone* for daring to "tamper" with the ending of "Celeste Aida." Since Tucker is only heeding what he was told to do two and a half years ago by Verdi's representative on earth, he may well wish to exclaim, Beckmesser-like, "Accursed maestro, this is your snare! The song is not my own, I swear."

Good male lieder singers are so rare nowadays that the emergence of someone of Dietrich-Dieskau's caliber is something of an event. For his HMV debut he has chosen Beethoven's cycle "An die ferne Geliebte" as well as Schubert's "Erlkönig" and Schumann's "Die beiden Grenadiere." He possesses an ample yet velvety baritone, which he uses with considerable musical and dramatic feeling.

As so often, Beecham makes a notable contribution to the month's orchestral choice. This time the works to benefit from his attention are Haydn's "Surprise" Symphony (No. 94 in G) and the Finale from Delius's "Koanga" (in which the Royal Philharmonic is joined by an unnamed chorus); the Tchaikovsky ration consists of an acceptable "Casse-Noisette" (Markevitch) and a magnificent "Romeo and Juliet" (Cantelli), both played by the Philharmonia Orchestra on HMV.

On the borderline between orchestral and instrumental work we have Mozart's delightful Five Contredanses, K.609, admirably played with the correct forces by the London Baroque Ensemble. Gioconda de Vito tackles the most popular of Handel's violin and keyboard sonatas, No. 4 in D, and plays it with harpsichord (George Malcolm), a curious decision in the face of her highly romantic playing. Lastly, Schnabel is further commemmorated with reissues of prewar sets of Beethoven's Opus 27, No. 1 (once in Volume II of the Beethoven Sonata Society) and Schubert's great posthumous Sonata in B flat.

—THOMAS HEINITZ.

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Drama on Records

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

THE TERRIFYING thing about records, as those who make them know, is just precisely that they are recorded. "Live" performances can be improved; but a record once released is like murder committed. One ought to be very sure and very proud of it before doing it. Generally, manufacturers of musical records realize this, and most of the performances they release at least justify their existence in permanent form.

This admirable rigor has not yet infused the field of dramatic records. Here, one often feels, the intent is taken for the deed; and the fact that a good play has been recorded clouds the point that something less than the austerity of a Beecham or Toscanini (to say nothing of their creative abilities) has governed the production. Consider the several recordings of verse plays discussed below. One of them is very good. But as to the others, although there are some admirable things in them, none of them in entirety is even a passable performance, let alone a fine one.

Obviously dramatic recordings can be no better than the theatre with which they are contemporary. But surely a woman with the clear intelligence of a Le Gallienne knows when she hears rank incompetence; and the director who had the wit to cast Margaret Phillips as Miranda must hear the difference in quality between her and others of his cast. In the theatre one can make allowances for the exigencies of production; on records, where more factors can be controlled, there is little excuse for anything but the best possible.

CHRISTOPHER FRY: *"The Lady's Not for Burning." John Gielgud, Pamela Brown. Directed by Gielgud.* (Decca set DX 110, $9.70; 2 LP's.) Some who saw this play a year ago felt that they would rather be reading than seeing it—not a compliment to any play, however well-written. It was so exclusively concerned with brocaded language that its production in a theatre seemed superfluous; its lack of valid theatricalism tended to make it boring. But on records—where a playwright's failure to fill theatrical requisites is less damaging, where attention can be satisfied with sounds—Mr. Fry's play is highly entertaining indeed. He has still to clear himself of the charge of substituting rhapsody for characterization and story; and an air of collegiate preciousness still tinges the work. But there is a great deal of fun and an occasional thrill to be had from his verbal pyrotechnics. Perhaps he will become the first great writer for records!

One hopes that Mr. Fry is decently grateful to his extraordinarily good cast. With the exception of Penelope Munday, who mistakes twitter for ingenue appeal, the same good actors who labored under a more or less undramatic burden on the stage succeed more fully when the focus is shifted to voice alone. John Gielgud is addicted as ever to tremolo; when a sentence or phrase ends in the consonant "n" or a vowel, it does not 'scape him lightly; but he endows his lines with bite and barb. He has always been at his best in ironic comedy. Pamela Brown is womanly and rich. In spite of a rather reedy voice, Richard Burton conveys considerable reticent charm. The others, especially Eliot Makeham's crinkly Chaplain, are equally engaging.

There is slight confusion in places because entrances and exits are not always clear, nor do we know to whom some lines are addressed. But the net effect is intelligent entertainment. It is to be hoped that many ladies (and gentlemen) are for Frying.

SHAKESPEARE: *"Romeo and Juliet" excerpts. John Gielgud, Pamela Brown. Also excerpts from "Hamlet" and five sonnets.* (Decca DL 9504, $5.85; 1 LP.) The Fry recording whets one's appetite for this "Romeo and Juliet," but alas, Miss Brown's Juliet is worse than disappointing. She employs only the top notes of her good voice; she frequently reads without sense or feeling; she is hag-ridden by meter. One must guess that her performance in the Fry play owes a great deal to Mr. Gielgud's direction and that he did not have the opportunity to prepare her adequately for this recording. Mr. Gielgud, on the other hand, gives a

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Stanley Kauffmann has been an actor and director in both theatre and radio, and has published over forty plays.

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warm and tender reading of Romeo. Again the tremolo, but with it fine feeling and an understanding of the poetic vein. One can note happily how over the years this player has expanded and exploited a voice not large by nature.

His "Hamlet" excerpts display, of course, sensitivity and sense but are not as successful as the recordings above. More space than is available here would be needed to discuss fully why this is so. To summarize drastically, Hamlet requires a tragic core, for the lack of which no technical equipment or easier emotion can fully compensate. For instance, the most famous soliloquy fails here simply because, when there is no familiar emotion to be expressed, when a great brooding quiet must filter through quiet lines, the absence of true tragic stature becomes apparent.

The reading of the sonnets is undistinguished.

SHAKESPEARE: *"Romeo and Juliet." Eva Le Gallienne, Dennis King, Richard Waring. Directed by Margaret Webster. Music adapted and conducted by George Cory* (Atlantic 401, $9.70; 2 LP's.) The least inadequate of the other offerings treated here, this recording is nevertheless awkwardly produced in places. There are sags at seene-ends because the music is rarely used, in radio's sensible way, as connective tissue between scenes but is employed simply as interludes. Importantly, however, there is real pleasure to be derived from Miss Le Gallienne's Juliet. It is a sober and deliberate performance, lacking in youthful impulse and somewhat inflexible in tempo, but it is always musical and lucid and frequently moving. Mr. Waring's Romeo is pleasant but his voice is severely limited in range and color. (If only the Gielgud Romeo could be combined with the Le Gallienne Juliet.) This Romeo sounds especially pallid next to Mr. King, who as Mercutio is certainly operatic and sometimes reads quite oddly but who has a genuine quality of theatrical projection.

SHAKESPEARE: *"The Tempest." Raymond Massey, Hurd Hatfield, Lionel Stander, Lee Grant, Margaret Phillips. Directed by Richard Barr. Music by Vladimir Cherniavsky.* (Polymusic 5001/2, $11.90; 2 LP's.) Not "a complete performance," as the album-cover states. The chief ornament of this generally pedestrian production is Margaret Phillips's Miranda which has a touching maidenly quality. Lee Grant is often quite believable as Ariel, no small attainment. Although Mr. Massey is always an earnest actor, his twangy voice and insipid readings do not encompass the majesty of Prospero nor the lofty complexities of his verse. The casting of Lionel Stander as Caliban was more clever than wise. Vladimir Cherniavsky's music is apt and well integrated.

Players' Scrapbook

ANTA ALBUM OF STARS, VOLUME 2. *With Katharine Cornell, Brian Aherne, Tallulah Bankhead, Henry Fonda, Julie Harris, Dame Edith Evans, Torin Thatcher.* (Decca DL 9009, $5.95.)

THIS is an interesting scrapbook of famous performances. The excerpts, like all scrapbooks, will mean most to those who have seen the performances or at least know the plays, but it is in any event a valuable historical record. Katharine Cornell and Brian Aherne perform their famous meeting scene from "The Barretts of Wimpole Street"; Mr. Aherne is particularly vital. Henry Fonda's linsey-woolsey charm as Dan is captured in an excerpt from "The Farmer Takes a Wife," in which he is nicely supported by Julie Harris. Tallulah Bankhead, whose voice has now unfortunately become a kind of comic trademark, has recorded two scenes from "The Little Foxes" with a pair of Smiths—Kent and Howard. And Dame Edith Evans, with Torin Thatcher and the late Ivan Simpson, plays two scenes from "The Sea Gull." This reviewer liked these last scenes best and is glad he is not obligated to draw a moral from the fact that the three leading actors in them were British and the dramatist Russian—in an American National Theatre album.

—S. K.

SHAKESPEARE: *"Richard II" excerpts. Stratford-Upon-Avon Festival Company.* (Allegro ALD 8001, $5.45; 1 LP.) An outstanding individual performance in this group of records is Robert Harris's Richard II in these three excerpts from that wonderful work. Mr. Harris is at his best in the melancholy vein and it sometimes seeps into other passages to rob him of fire and climax; but there are poetry and pathos in him. In spite of some disturbing choppiness, John Ruddock achieves a good measure of the grandeur of the dying John of Gaunt.

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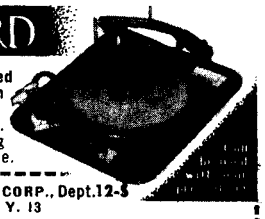

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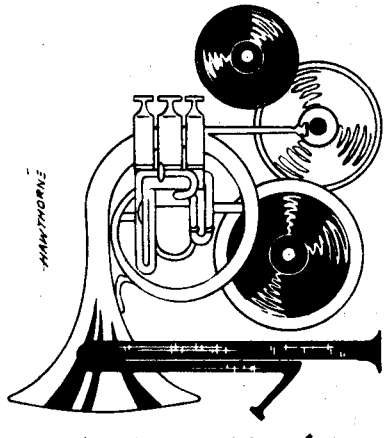
Major Debussy, Minor Poulenc

THE twelve piano Etudes of Debussy belong, together with "The Well-Tempered Clavier" and the Chopin Etudes, to that small body of "utility pieces" which serve both practical purposes and the highest demands of art. Seldom performed because of their technical difficulty and stylistic complexity, they are all the more welcome in the excellent recording by Charles Rosen (R-E-B Editions 6, $5.95). The Etudes are Debussy's last work for piano, written three years before his death, and claim close stylistic kinship with the ballet "Jeux"—the same harmonic acerbity, the same disintegration of melodic line into radiant sprays of sonorities. Each Etude has its own pianistic function: one gives practice in playing thirds (and what practice!), another concentrates on chromatic intervals, a third addresses itself to repeated notes; but as with Chopin, the listener can ignore the application and derive full sustenance in purely auditory measure. No music is more gloriously laid out for piano than this summation of Debussy's keyboard writing, where behind the abstract glitter lurks always the essential Debussy—the poet of "Pelléas," the painter of "La Mer." Charles Rosen, who is both pianist and a teacher of French literature (and only twenty-four), plays the Etudes with a brilliant command of their technical problems and a sensitive awareness of their expressive content. With the added pleasure of superlative piano reproduction this is altogether a recording to cherish.

In the same way that Debussy's Etudes harken back to Chopin, Fauré's "Dolly" (for piano duet) recalls Schumann, specifically the Schumann of "Kinderscenen." Fauré's recollections of childhood have not the touching insight of Schumann's, nor have they anything like the same architectural structure, but the atmosphere is tender and the melodies ingratiating, especially in the opening "Lullaby," with its long expiring breaths so typical of Fauré. I am not sure how the final "Spanish Dance" fits into the juvenile framework; it is, in any case, remarkably apropos as a rollicking homage to Chabrier. This recording is a Casadesus venture (Robert and Gaby) that has the expectable style and finish (Columbia ML 2205, $4).

The Fairfield Chamber Group, after a stint of Milhaud and Hindemith, has turned its attention to three Poulenc works of questionable value: a Sextet for Piano and Winds, a Trio for Piano, Oboe, and Bassoon, and a Sonata for Clarinet and Bassoon (R-E-B- Editions 7, $5.95). They are listed in order of interest, though even the Sextet, relatively well endowed, has only minor rewards for the listener who craves something beyond facile brashness. Every now and then one of Poulenc's melting, bitter-sweet tunes fights its way clear of the bright instrumental chatter, but all too seldom. More and more it becomes clear that the great Poulenc, the composer of honest sentiment and powerful expression, is to be found almost exclusively in the vocal works.

Complementing his Couperin disc issued last summer, Claude Jean Chiasson now offers a recital of French harpischord pieces of authorship other than Couperin ranging from the sixteenth-century Gervaise to the eighteenth-century Balbastre (Lyrichord



LL 19, $5.95). If I pick out the regal Gervaise "Pavane," the Chambonnières Chaconne in F, or Rameau's "La Timide" (with its startling presentiment of Poulenc), it is only to indicate the richness of this well-contrived collection. Chiasson is neither the most brilliant nor the most imaginative of performers, but he plays with taste and transmits his own delight in the music he projects.

The Urania company has got hold of a worthy idea in issuing Couperin's Ordres as individual entities, thus enabling us to hear this composer's keyboard music in the sequence he intended, which is certainly Couperin's due no less than Bach's. Unfortunately, the admirable idea founders here in its application, amid the erratic hard-driven interpretations of Eta Harich-Schneider (Fourteenth Ordre, URLP 5003, $4.75; Twenty-Fourth Ordre, URLP 5001, $4.75). This is seeing Couperin whole, but hardly steady.

—ROLAND GELATT.

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Pop Roundup

SEVERAL years ago there flourished briefly a company called Musicraft, which spawned a great many interesting pop and jazz recordings, and which sponsored some new talents that today shine quite brightly in Tin Pan Alley's galaxy. Unfortunately the company could not match its artistic taste with business acumen or production know-how, and it went under. However, its wealth of masters was acquired by M-G-M, which is reissuing the old waxings with some regularity now. *Sans* surface noise, one can hear things never heard before.. Then too, for added enjoyment, some of the old albums are now available on LP.

First, there are two highly recommended piano sets. One is by the talented Walter Gross, erstwhile Musicraft musical director, who does SONGS BY VINCENT YOUMANS (M-G-M E-114). They're the same songs you can find in every other Youmans collection—"Tea for Two," "Time on My Hands," etc., but Gross's interpretations are fresh, clean, and more virile than those of the average pop pianist . . . The other set is by TEDDY WILSON (E-100), one of the all-time jazz greats. Wilson's delicate, tasteful inventions actually enhance the beauty of such melodies as "Long Ago and Far Away" and "Cheek to Cheek." . . . Then there's an early Sarah Vaughan version of DON'T BLAME ME (M-G-M 11068), made before this highly original stylist went saccharine. . . . Louanne Hogan, whose main business is dubbing in the "singing voice" for vocally unendowed film stars, shed her anonymity for an occasional Musicraft side, the best of which was Vernon Duke's AUTUMN IN NEW YORK, now reissued on the other side of Kern's LOOK FOR THE SILVER LINING (M-G-M 11093). . . . Which brings to mind a long-time unexpressed complaint: If the companies want to excavate great old show tunes for an admittedly limited, sophisticated public, why don't they go all out—record the verses, extra choruses, etc., which often contain the real, the truly original music and lyrics?

Assorted Vocals

Jo Stafford's cool voice produces some mystical overtones that are eminently suited to American folk music, for reasons that elude us, frankly. However, she has recorded a thing called ALLENTOWN JAIL, which is a folk song by derivation only, and it makes for a hauntingly beautiful, unusual side (COL 39389) . . . Art Lund's I CAN'T GET STARTED (M-G-M 11106) is also unusual—a version of this tune not by Bunny Berigan. The overside is a buoyant, boyish BLUE SKIES, and the standard coupling is really very pleasant to have around. . . . An even more vital lad, Frankie Laine, has a new LP entitled ONE FOR MY BABY (COL 6200), with a strange assortment of show tunes, rhythm tunes, and other assorted wails and shouts, best of which are the title song—an old Arlen Mercer gem—and "When It's Sleepy Time Down South." Laine also has a colorful single, FLAMENCO (COL 39585), another example of this man's potent style.

Rumba Report

Los Guaracheros de Oriente, long one of our favorite *conjuntos*, prove that it's possible to retain full tropical flavor while playing and singing in tune. The group carries a single trumpet, and full complement of guitars, shakers, and voices. Like most Cuban groups, they generate most excitement in their *guarachas*, such as EL PELUQUERO (RCA 51-5575) and BANATE MANUEL (RCA 51-5583), but their slower sides are also perfect for dancers. Don't let the abundance of vocal choruses dissuade you. . . . By comparison, Xavier Cugat's MAMBO AT THE WALDORF (COL 39579) is rather genteel, but also danceable. . . . The pianist-leader Fausto Curbelo should satisfy both native and Yanqui tastes with his lively, brassy COMO ESTA LA COSA (RCA 51-5572) . . . That astounding, unidentifed Mexican trumpeter with the Luis Arcaraz orchestra has another *tour de force* in the TRUMPET MAMBO (RCA 47-4355).

Dance Discs

From a limited field, these sides may be recommended: JUST ONE MORE CHANCE, Ralph Flanagan Orch. (RCA 47-4402); CHARMAINE, same band (RCA 47-4373); DON'T BE THAT WAY, Harry James (COL 39582); THE CLOSER YOU ARE and TOO MANY DREAMS, Buddy de Franco Orch. (M-G-M 11107); ALWAYS, ALWAYS (waltz), Percy Faith Orch. (COL 39556); LONG AGO, Jack Fina Orch. (M-G-M 11121).

—BILL SIMON.

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JEWELS OF THE EMPRESS

(*Continued from page 33*)

Walker has recalled. "Real Southern." Then she quickly became a prime favorite of the colored vaudeville circuits and the great race record market. In the middle Twenties she had years of prosperity when she made as much as $5,000 a week. Then there was drink, and a commercially disastrous break with Walker. In 1937 Bessie died following an automobile accident near Clarksdale, Mississippi.

When her part in the new anthology has been duly credited that is, of course, only the half of it. For the traditional blues are not solo efforts—they are antiphonal. The solo voice is constantly followed by instrumental comment. The packed delights of these new Columbia records include the playing of some of the finest instrumentalists in jazz history. Nine of the sides on the first record, for instance, have Louis Armstrong in the antiphonal role. The trumpet master has been dealt with at length in these pages recently, and I will merely suggest that his incredibly lovely traceries around Bessie's voice include a "St. Louis Blues," with Fred Longshaw on the organ, which is perhaps the sovereign record of that tune.

There are other superb accompanists, such as a violinist whose name—Robert Robbins—never appeared in musical history before and probably never will again. There is the elegant James P. Johnson on the piano. And there are Fletcher Henderson and his legendary side men, Charlie "Big" Green and Joe Smith. Charlie Green was the trombonist who joined Bessie Smith in the famous "Empty Bed Blues." The first side of this two-sided work is, believe me, the funniest phonograph record ever made. The unbelievable series of quacks, hints, sighs, and gooses which Charlie's trombone provides behind Bessie's lubricious story is no mere novelty playing or gagging—it is the essence of comedy, and bewildering, like so many unique achievements. As for Joe Smith, he was a spidery little man who used to play the cornet in Henderson's band next to another member of the pantheon, Tommy Ladnier. Joe Smith, so it is said, was Bessie Smith's favorite colleague, and that is small wonder—the man delivered the most dulcet, sensitive, roundly affectionate music one could wish to hear. Charlie Green froze to death one night on a Harlem doorstep; Joe Smith died at thirty after four years in a Long Island hospital. But they can be heard, over and over again, with Bessie Smith, who sang, with due allowance for error:

Woke up this mo'nin'
When chickens were crowin' for day,
Felt on the right side of my pillow,
My man had gone away.
By his pillow he left a note
Reading, "I'm sorry, jane,
"You got my goat,
"No time to marry,
"No time to settle down."
I'm a young woman
An' ain't done runnin' roun',
I'm a young woman
An' ain't done runnin' roun',
Some people call me a hobo,
Some call me a bum,
Nobody knows my name,
Nobody knows what I've done,
I'm as good as any woman in your town;
I ain't no high yaller,
I'm a deep yaller-brown.
I ain't goin' marry, ain't goin' settle down,
I'm goin' drink good moonshine
An' run these browns down.
See that long, lonesome road?
Don' you know it's gotta end?
An' I'm a good woman,
An' I kin get plenty men.

THE SPAWN OF LP

(*Continued from page 37*)

Haas: these symbolize the Decca judgment in its choice of musicians. Whatever such people choose to record is not likely to be easily surpassed by anyone else. The Mozart Clarinet Concerto by Kell and Zimbler, the eight light and fresh Boyce symphonies by the latter, a pair of Mozart Serenades by a wind octet under Kell's direction, and the Beethoven Serenade, Opus 8, by the two Fuchs's with Leonard Rose are all editions of emphatic merit.

Decca's contracts with European manufacturers are impressive. She has had the Parlophone-Odeon list available and has drawn some notable successes therefrom, including very successful dubbings of Tauber and Supervia, and the model cooperation of Simon Goldberg and Lili Kraus in a set of six Mozart sonatas. Decca's liaison with Deutsche Grammophon has provided Richard Strauss's unique interpretations of his own works. The Deutsche Grammophon collaboration has also produced some new discs exhibiting the conducting skill of Ferenc Fricsay, particularly in a resolutely unhysterical performance of Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony.

After all, then, we find signs of a system: a series of Strauss conducting his own work; the outstanding pieces in the clarinet repertory played by Reginald Kell; the Zimbler Sinfonietta and the Kell Chamber Players in compositions — eighteenth or twentieth century—requiring expert ensembles of small dimensions.

Wilhelm Kempff is the only pianist of the past two decades whose playing of the entire Beethoven repertory could be compared to Schnabel's without dishonor. For obscure reasons of musical promotion he never had a measure of the réclame Schnabel so justly deserved, but the restricted fame of his superb pianism penetrated to the most perceptively musical quarters. Professor Kempff recorded all the Beethoven sonatas for Deutstche Grammophon, some of them twice; he has just made them again, and the fruits will be available here shortly. The varied prejudices of music-lovers no doubt will balk here and there at any one man's projection of the thirty-two sonatos; but they will balk at fewer of Kempff's than at any other pianist's living.

In thirteen months Decca has created for her public a substantial if irregular repertory; and her plans reveal an increment more substantial and much more regular. Like the other self-sufficient pillars of the industry, Columbia and RCA Victor, she records, processes, presses, and distributes her own discs. A long history of cheap materials yielding noisy surfaces has now been forgotten. A remarkable feature of her output is a certain serenity of competence which has produced no *spectacular* records in terms of purely acoustical response—none spectacularly good and none spectacularly bad; but she has not wrapped up lemons, or printed tin cans. (This is not to say that the acoustical values of parts of the Tauber, Supervia, and other LP's dubbed from 78's are not inversely proportional to the age of the original recordings.)

For discophiles it is a comfort to rely on the healthy outlook and sturdy criterion of a manufacturer whose successive issuances maintain a familiar technical quality with little deviation, and that little never downward.

—C. G. Burke.

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Spotlight on the Moderns

IF we must have such slogans as "neo-classicism" to saddle on composers like Hindemith, it would be more accurate in his case, though a bit more ponderous, to make it "neo-pre-classicism." Any such tag, of course, oversimplifies, and the "neo" unfortunately has the approbrious implication of retrogression. It accounts for only one of the many traditions that make this well-rounded composer the twentieth-century musician he is. But if we are to look to the past for the sources that have molded his wholly personal style, we are more likely to find them in German music up to and including Bach than in the subsequent classic era of Haydn and Mozart.

"Morning Music" for brass instruments, one of an assortment of Hindemith works on a Circle LP (51-100, $5.95), clearly harks back, within his own terms, to the seventeenth-century *Turmsonaten* or German tower music. This was a functional music for brass ensemble in such forms as harmonized chorale, fanfare, and dance, emanating from town hall or church tower to announce the hour or serve some occasion of civic interest. It was a device for communication in a society without radio, and "Trauermusik," on the same LP, would be its modern counterpart, since it was composed for a broadcast immediately following the death of George V. In the present version, with the viola solo transposed to trombone by Davis Shuman (with the composer's sanction), the affinity to old tower music goes even farther, notably in the section based on a traditional chorale. Such a chorale brings similar allusions into the lengthy dirge that closes the trumpet sonata on an EMS recording (LP No. 4, $5.95).

The whole concept of functional music for which Hindemith is noted is, in fact, a reinstatement of music's earliest role, before the self-expression of nineteenth-century romanticists established the principle that music needed no occasion to be composed, being itself the occasion. The romantic principle demanded that every work aim at being a towering masterpiece to justify itself. But at an earlier time it was enough to serve a purpose with artisanship—inspiration, if it happened to go along, being wholly gratuitous. Artisanship of the highest technical order is enough to justify the Hindemith sonatas for trumpet, trombone, and bassoon solo, each with piano accompaniment, on the EMS record. Their function is to provide much needed solo material for instrumentalists who are usually relegated to a servile position at the back of an orchestra or chamber group. All three sonatas are superbly performed by Alex Wilson, trumpet; Bernard Garfield, bassoon; Roger Smith, trombone, and Theodore Lettvin, pianist.

The trombone sonata is also on the Circle LP, but although Davis Shuman's reading has the composer's approval, I prefer the more animated pacing and flexible approach of the EMS version. Sam Raphling's piano accompaniment lacks incisiveness, and here too the effect is marred by the all too common practice of exaggerating the presence of the solo instrument at the expense of the piano.

What Hindemith has done for the German chorale Charles Ives has done for the American hymn tune. Sonatas Nos. 1 and 3 for violin and piano (Lyrichord LP 17, $5.95) owe their main charm to their frank handling of this material and also to the prophetic suggestions (early in this century) of ragtime, often coupled with echoes of the barn-dance fiddle. The later sonata is more compact than the first, which is a highly meandering product. Joan Field has obviously worked hard and devotedly on the violin part and Leopold Mittman is the excellent collaborating pianist.

The Respighi vogue is pretty much over for us. His gaudy scores seem rather tarnished when revived. "Botticelli Triptych" (Vanguard LP 418, $5.95) is not quite as gaudy, but its specious archaic modal harmony wears as thin as the gilt antique finish on cheap furniture. Franz Litschauer pulls luxurious sounds out of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra and the Locatelli chamber concert on the reverse side, also beautifully played and reproduced, is worth the price of the whole LP.

In reviewing the new Dial release of Schoenberg's "Pierrot Lunaire" last month, I stated my preference for the old Columbia album (78 rpm), with the composer conducting and Erika Stiedry Wagner reciting. Columbia has now reissued this on LP in the "Meet the Composer" series (ML 4471, $5.45). Either my old copy is so worn that the sound has been affected, or Columbia has compensated in the repressing for the inadequacies of the old reproduction. I find the reissue very satisfying, indeed, in every way.

—ARTHUR BERGER.

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Balance—At All Costs

THE human ear prefers its musical sound evenly distributed pitchwise about a mid-point, roughly equidistant from the extremes of audible sound at the high and low ends. And there lies a potent principle for good listening in reproduced music.

Granted exceptions—the high tinkle of a glockenspiel solo, the low harmonies of a male barbershop quartet—but the rule of pitch balance holds remarkably firm in the long listening; for music is conceived for the ear, and the ear responds most acutely as to pitch and most sensitively as to volume at the level which has determined music's mid-point, not to mention the center of the piano keyboard and the musical staff. The average pitch of the speaking voice, which was designed to be heard intelligibly, lies also in this middle range of tonal balance.

In reproduced music the law of pitch has applications perhaps unanticipated by the Creator. Fidelity to the original requires the same balance but in ways not previously imaginable. If we reproduce a full range of highs in our music we must, to satisfy the ear, provide an equally full range of bass—which we do not always do. On the other hand, if we clip off the sounds at one end of the spectrum we are strictly enjoined to clip the other end in proportion, to please the autocratic sense of hearing; otherwise we have imbalance, which is resentfully interpreted in terms of distortion, unnaturalness, and even pain.

The complications are intriguing. The ear flies against the facts. Take a clean, low-distortion, wide-range sound, a complete sound, and suppress one half of it, throwing the balance awry. Remove the bass and instead of one half an undistorted spectrum we hear a whole and very ugly sound; the remaining highs seem (though they are not) grossly distorted, shrill, metallic, cutting. A convincing illusion! Restore the missing bass, however, and though the highs remain exactly as before, suddenly all is pleasant and comfortable, the hurt is gone, the "distortion" removed. Balance is restored. Similarly, remove the high end and again we hear, not a perfect half, but a most imperfect whole; now it is muffled, leaden, soggy, thumpy, colorless—and wholly unrealistic as a reproduction of musical sound.

The law of pitch balance is far more potent than you may think. It accounts for the acceptability of 99 per cent of our phonographs and radios, deficient as they are in both highs and lows. Why does the tiny table radio, inches square, please so many cultured ears with Mozart, Beethoven, and the rest, to the endless chagrin of the hi-fi experts? Because the ears in question are untrained to high fidelity? Because they "know no better"? Not a bit. Because quite correctly the listener finds here a proper and natural balance between the high and low content, centering upon the middle range. No highs, no lows, just middle. Hi-fi enthusiasts take this to heart! Your friends who enjoy their sub-microscopic midgets may have a long shot on you. Following the demands of their own discriminating ears they have unwittingly hit upon the truth.

A properly balanced small machine, admittedly lacking in much that is available in recorded or broadcast sound, nevertheless may produce music with higher *fidelity*, with greater naturalness, than many a souped-up hi-fi system.

Two major applications here. Without any question, a good many thousands of good ears have been protesting violently and in vain (to their owners' bewilderment) against gross high-fidelity imbalance, achieved via the most expensive equipment available. Highs we have today, with space if not cash economy, and with precision. Bass, potentially available in every good amplifier and speaker, is an acoustical problem and a difficult one; only recently, with the new horn and other special enclosures, has wide-range bass begun to catch up with wide-range treble. A great part of the illusive distortions in the highs that so many hi-fi fans track after agonizingly, to no avail, are basically matters of imbalance. With good balance (as with good source distribution) the ear minimizes distortion; with poor balance it exaggerates it or even "creates" it.

FOR every recording that is deficient in bass as you play it, you must deliberately attenuate the high end via tone control, to restore balance—though some would insist that merely makes matters worse. They are wrong. If you would reproduce 15,000 cycles flat you must go after your sub-cellar tones, down in the forties and fifties, or you will have chronic ear trouble. And for every recording (old ones, for example) that is deficient in highs, you must deliberately attentuate the bass in proportion, to keep the equilibrium.

The most significant present problem of balance lies not in hi-fi but in the area of the home machine. No highs, no lows, and your midget or modest console isn't bad, though it denies you a lot. But recent developments—better phono cartridges, better speakers, FM radio, and microgroove records—have begun to add dangerous new highs to current models. Dangerous doubly. First, because distortion, which lives among the highs, is rife. But worse, because imbalance is in the making, and distortions are horribly magnified by imbalance. The greatest significance of such bass-producing devices as the R-J enclosure ("Bull Frog Bass") to my mind will be to provide the desperately needed increment, not of ultra-bottom bass, but of the more modest bass (much more important in music anyway) that will offset the present increase in highs in the home set. Hi-fi we may well cherish, but balance we must have, at all costs.

—EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

Krips or Krauss

SIR: The same error has occurred twice in the last RECORDINGS [*SRL* Nov. 24]. The London "Fledermaus" was not conducted by Josef Krips, as stated, but by Clemens Krauss.

M. BETTELHEIM.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The error occurred twice because the editor was responsible for both. In assessing the quips and cranks and wanton wiles of London's Johann Strauss issues, he has merged Krips and Krauss into one super-Straussian. 'Twill not happen again—he hopes.*

How Many "Italians"?

SIR: There are now four long-playing releases of Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony, but it seems that there are two "Italians." I have found that there is a decided difference in the first movements of some of these versions. Are there two scores for this work, or two editions, that would account for this discrepancy? . . .

PAUL J. PORTNOFF.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *There are, in fact, two versions of the "Italian" Symphony, though we were not previously aware that more than one has been perpetuated in circulation. The work was written quite early in Mendelssohn's career (1833), but not published until after his death. Most biographers represent the alterations made by the composer during later years as inconsequential, but if they are conspicuous enough to be noticed, they should be accounted for in some more authoritative way. Comments from Mendelssohnians are invited.*

Query on Weingartner

SIR: What is the state of the Weingartner-on-LP project about which there was considerable correspondence and hopeful indication of cooperation from Columbia some months ago in RECORDINGS?

JOHN WILSON.

Chicago, Ill.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Indications are that Columbia will release the first of these early in 1952. Preparatory work is approaching completion, and present plans call for release of the nine Beethoven and the four Brahms symphonies in sequence (monthly or thereabouts).*

Vote for Menotti

SIR: *In my record library is an album of recordings that I would not have had had it not been for your department, Madeleine Grey's "Songs of the Auvergne."* Recently in Indianapolis I heard Rudolf Firkusny play the Menotti Piano Concerto with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra . . . He is the artist who should record this work, since he gave the first performance of it and has a flair for the performance of contemporary music . . . Is there a chance that this work may be recorded through your influence?

GILBERT COBLE.

Garrett, Ind.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Whether the work will be done by Firkusny seems doubtful—so far as Columbia is concerned—but we hear that it may be forthcoming from another source soon.*

New "Enigma"?

SIR: What chance is there of Edward Elgar's great "Enigma" Variations being added to the LP catalogue? It is a conspicuous omission which could be best remedied by a version directed by Arturo Toscanini.

MRS. ALLEN FORBES.

Boston, Mass.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Just how soon such a thing may become available is uncertain, but the work was actually recorded by Toscanini at a recent session with the NBC Symphony. Those interested in new Toscanini versions of the First and Fourth Brahms symphonies and the Seventh of Beethoven may be reassured to know that these, too, were recorded by Maestro Toscanini within recent weeks.*

Boom for Gigli

SIR: As far as you know, does RCA have any intention of pressing any of Gigli's old recordings, such as "Madama Butterfly," "Tosca," "Bohème," "Pagliacci," etc. The reason I am inquiring is that other companies are producing versions of these works, and I would still prefer the Gigli ones if they are going to be made available.

PVT. A. G. BRADY.

Postmaster, NYC.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Word from the oracles of RCA is that "Butterfly" and "Tosca" may be LPed. So far, no definite place for them is allocated on the schedule. "Bohème" is improbable, because the plan is to do the Toscanini broadcast version when the Maestro gives consent, which is still pending.*

Jacket Identification

SIR: Why cannot all LP issuers be prevailed upon to adopt a standard method of identifying composer and work on the back of LP jackets? At the present time, most firms print this information vertically on the upper right-hand corner of the jacket, thus enabling easy identification when LP's are stacked together on a shelf. Unfortunately, a few companies put this data in the center of the jacket, where it can't easily be seen if a hundred or so LP's are crammed into a shelf.

GEORGE BROOKS.

Philadelphia, Pa.

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